



PARADISE OF DEMONIC GODS

BOOK 03

Bear Wolfdog

EPUB CREATION BY LISA HAYES

Paradise of Demonic Gods

(魔神乐园)

by

Bear Wolfdog

(熊狼狗)

Synopsis

“Obtaining the topmost degree of talent in sword arts in the world requires giving up 72 years of lifespan, which leaves you with only five more years of your life. At the same time, you will never be able to feel love, kinship, and friendship, and you’ll end up leading a lonely life until your death, unable to procreate, or to have any descendants.

“From now onwards, everything related to happiness in the human world shall no longer be of your concern. Are you willing to accept this?”

“Hahahaha, I’m already alone bereft of all support, my hopes dashed to pieces, shouldering only absolutely irreconcilable grudge and hatred, why would I disagree? Why would I not want it? I couldn’t ask for anything better!!”

His sword sweeps across the Divine Continent for seven days and nights, moving 90,000 miles through the starry skies, unhindered.

He slays saints and buddhas in Heaven, slaughters demons and devils in Hell, sweeping away all the grievances in his heart!

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Chapter 201 Attention

After Yuelun said that he wanted to take Fang Xingjian in as his disciple, he looked at the commotion that had broken out in the hall, then smiled and said, “I’ve heard that the Hundred Blossom Banquet organized by Madam Hathaway has invited all the talented students from the twelve academies in the Great Western Region.

“Given that he has transitioned into a Windstorm Sword Hero, he ought to be considered a genius in KIRST Royal Academy. Therefore, I’ve come here to look for him.”

From a distance, a lady with a poised, dignified and mature disposition, yet with the figure of a young lady in her twenties, smiled and said, “All talented individuals and heroes have been invited to the Hundred Blossom Banquet. This is both to allow for all of the elites in our Great Western Region to gather for an exchange, as well as to announce the examination content in the upcoming Regional Selection.”

Saying these, Hathaway looked toward the others and inquired, “May I ask where Fang Xingjian is?” When she spoke, her lungs trembled, as if a strong surge of energy was quivering in the air, as she easily propelled her words to everyone’s ears.

Everyone quieten down, as if they wanted to see what the genius who had transitioned into a Windstorm Sword Hero, the person who was highly regarded by a Divine level expert, looked like.

Lilia also started to anxiously look around. She was both excited about Fang Xingjian being chosen as a Divine level expert’s disciple, and looking forward to whether Fang Xingjian would also attend this banquet.

That was her true reason for attending the Hundred Blossom Banquet.

However, amidst the silence, no one stepped forth. Hathaway called out once again, but seeing that the situation stayed the same, she frowned and asked, “Is there anyone from Kirst Academy here today? Those from Kirst Academy, please raise your hand to confirm.”

Edger could no longer pretend as if he had not heard anything. Helplessly, he slowly raised his hand, and immediately all eyes locked onto him with burning gazes.

Hathaway asked him straight away, “Who are you? Where is Headmaster Jackson? Hasn’t Fang Xingjian come?”

Edger gulped. How had he managed to become the center of attention? Under the countless gazes of so many powerful, well-known characters from the Great Western City, he felt as if he was losing all his strength.

Especially so under Hathaway’s gaze. She was the Governor’s wife! Slightly nervous, he answered, “Headmaster Jackson is sick and is resting in Kirst. I’m the Deputy Headmaster, Edger. This time around, I’m representing Headmaster Jackson and attending the banquet in his place.

“Erm... Fang Xingjian...” At the mention of Fang Xingjian, his face turned red. He felt extremely awkward, unable to advance or retreat, and simply did not know what to say.

Was he supposed to say that Fang Xingjian had disappeared? Or that he had been pushed away?

This was simply putting negative labels on Kirst Royal Academy, such as incompetency, lack of control, and the inability to educate, right before all the aristocrats in the Great Western City.

Hathaway impatiently asked, “What on earth has happened? Can’t you even talk?”

Edger was stumbling over his words, unable to reply.

Just as he was facing the predicament, Hathaway’s gaze had

turning increasingly colder, Setques finally brought Fang Xingjian to the hall. He smiled and said, “Madam, my apologies. There’s been some misunderstandings. Young Master Fang Xingjian has just arrived.”

Setques’s words attracted everyone’s gazes right away. They all bypassed the steward and landed on the fat Valen and on Fang Xingjian.

Fat Valen did not seem related to a Windstorm Sword Hero in the least. Moreover, he was an official of Great Western City, and many people recognized him.

Hathaway smiled, looking at Fang Xingjian, and asked, “Are you Fang Xingjian? The Windstorm Sword Hero from Kirst?”

Everyone’s gazes gradually focused on Fang Xingjian, on this young man who looked like a beggar with his dishevelled hair, unkempt appearance and shabby clothing. Expressions of ridicule, sneer, envy or admiration filled the aristocrats’ eyes as their gazes landed on Fang Xingjian.

“This is Fang Xingjian? Haha, he doesn’t seem to be anything special...”

“Where did this guy pop up from? He looks like a savage. He’s no better than me. What right does he have to become a Divine level expert’s disciple?”

“What do you know? It’s obvious that he has just returned from a period of tough cultivation. It’s true that endless effort and hardships lie behind every successful person.”

If the others’ gazes were those of jealousy and hatred, then David and the Shadow Death God Anderson were looking at him with jealousy and killing intent. Becoming a Divine level expert’s disciple attracted too much ill will.

But who was Fang Xingjian? He was a blind man. So he turned to look in the direction from where the lady, Hathaway had spoken,

as if he had not felt a single thing.

Although he was unable to see beyond ten meters, he could still hear the direction where the voice was coming from.

He looked at Hathaway with his eyes closed and replied, “I’m Fang Xingjian.”

Seeing Fang Xingjian’s closed eyes, Hathaway said, “I heard that your eyes were hurt by poison during the battle with Garcia’s Destined Warrior. Hasn’t your sight recovered yet?”

Fang Xingjian calmly replied, “No.”

Hathaway smiled and said, “However, it’s alright. You should remember this day. It’s your lucky day.”

Hearing that Fang Xingjian was blind, everyone’s gazes of jealousy grew increasingly stronger. They all knew that the Holy Orison was in the top ten Divine level experts of the Empire, and the only one skilled in healing.

Not only was Fang Xingjian to be taken in as a disciple, but his eyes would be healed as well. What a great honor this was!

Everyone was looking at Fang Xingjian, wishing that they could be in his shoes.

Edger’s body unconsciously trembled, as if waves of explosions had smashed into him. He felt both excited and shocked that Fang Xingjian would be taken in as a disciple by a Divine level expert.

However, he also felt unease and fear when he recalled how he had not thought well of Fang Xingjian, and had tried to push him away.

Both emotions filled up his body concurrently, making him feel as if he had been injected with chicken blood [1].

On hearing what Hathaway had just said, Fang Xingjian felt a bit puzzled. He was unaware that the Divine level expert, the Holy Orison, had planned on taking him in as a disciple.

Seeing Fang Xingjian's confused look, Hathaway turned and looked toward Master Yuelun, but started frowning. Master Yuelun was simply staring straight at Fang Xingjian, as if he had just seen something unbelievable.

It was only when Hathaway gave a slight cough that Master Yuelun regained his senses. However, the look he threw Fang Xingjian was still a bit weird.

‘How could it be... How could it be so similar?’

‘Is this a coincidence... or...?’

He then came up with a terrifying conjecture about why his teacher had gotten him to come here on his behalf and take Fang Xingjian as his disciple.

However, he was still a level 29 expert and showed no changes of expression. He amiably looked at Fang Xingjian and said, “Fang Xingjian, my teacher is the Holy Orison. After seeing your records, he's very interested in your condition. Are you willing to follow Teacher to learn and cultivate in the Sacred Mountain?”

In that instant, all gazes were focused on Fang Xingjian. Everyone was waiting for his reply in great anticipation, waiting to witness this historical moment.

[1] For those who don't remember, please refer back to chapter 94.

Chapter 202 Rejection

However, unlike what everyone had expected, Fang Xingjian did not agree right away. Neither was he overwhelmed by joy, nor did he replied with excitement.

He stayed calm, and amidst the silence, he calmly replied, “May I ask if there are any requirements?”

Hearing this question, everyone stared at Fang Xingjian with eyes wide-open and mouths agape.

What was he asking? He was actually asking if there were any requirements for the Divine level expert to be taking him in as a disciple? Did he think of it as the tuition fees paid to home tutors?

However, Master Yuelun maintained his amiable smile. He slowly walked up to Fang Xingjian and said, “Child, don’t think too much. Teacher will not set any requirements when he takes in disciples.

“If you really must insist on listing one, it would be that you must stay in the Sacred Mountain and cultivate for five years. After the five years are up, you’ll be able to leave once you’ve passed Teacher’s test. Otherwise, you may end up ruining Teacher’s reputation.”

“I must stay in the mountain for five years? Must I stay for the full five years?” When Fang Xingjian heard this, his brows tightly knit together.

Yuelun was slightly stunned, as if he had never expected for Fang Xingjian to be so insistent on this problem. Normally, no matter the type of genius, upon hearing that a Divine level expert wished to take one in as a disciple, one would excitedly and wholeheartedly agree. However, this lad was still acting as if he was scared that someone would be conning him to get his money.

He shook his head and gave it some thought. Thinking that he

had managed to see through Fang Xingjian's worries, he asked, "Is it because you have family or friends you'll miss? Don't worry, you can bring them along with you."

If an ordinary person were to show so much hesitation, Yuelun would no longer pay them any heed. However, once he saw Fang Xingjian's face, he could not help but simply go along with him.

When Fang Xingjian and Yuelun were having their conversation, all the people in the surroundings had their eyes popping out as they looked at the two of them in disbelief.

Master Yuelun was very polite and warm to Fang Xingjian, as if he was talking to his own son. Was this still the Holy Orison's chief disciple they knew?

David, in particular, was feeling as if his lungs were going to explode from anger when he saw Fang Xingjian and Yuelun chatting. How he wished he could replace Fang Xingjian, and wished that he was actually Fang Xingjian!

Hearing Yuelun's reply, Fang Xingjian shook his head and said, "I have things I need to do. I can't stay for five years."

After giving it some thought, he chose not to share the secret that he only had four years left to live, and his purpose of revenge. It was not something he ought to do. Once he shared it, too many things would change.

Hearing Fang Xingjian's reply, Yuelun seemed to be extremely shocked. However, this was also something with which he could not compromise on. He replied seriously, "The five years in the mountains are part of our Church of Universal Truth's regulations, to go through fasting, ablution, and prayer. It did not change even when Teacher had gone up the mountain.

"Only the traitors of the church leave before the five years are up."

Having heard this reply, Fang Xingjian turned silent. He was

considering whether it would be better for him to continue on the path to participate in the Regional Selection and eventually the National Selection, or, to go under the wings of the Holy Orison and rebel once he got strong enough.

The more Fang Xingjian was silent, the more everyone's gazes toward him grew increasingly strange.

Was this Fang Xingjian an idiot? To refuse a Divine level expert?

What was he thinking? There were many people who wanted to rush up and agree on Fang Xingjian's behalf.

Edger did not care about it much, squeezing through the crowd and ran up to Fang Xingjian, judgmentally asking, "Fang Xingjian, are you an idiot? It's your good fortune accumulated for many lives to have the Guardian King take you in as his disciple. What are you still hesitating for? Quickly say that you'll agree to it!"

He very much wanted to press down on Fang Xingjian's head and to agree on his behalf. How good a thing was this? It was not just beneficial for Fang Xingjian, but for Kirst as well. A Divine level expert specially spending someone on his behalf to take in a student as his disciple would be great advertisement for Kirst Academy, and would also greatly increase the academy's reputation.

Kirst Academy would also turn famous very quickly. Countless people would take part in the Prefectural Selection in Kirst and then enrol in Kirst Academy.

Moreover, now right they were before most of the aristocrats in Great Western City. Edger felt that if he were to give Fang Xingjian directions, it would win him much respect. In the future, if news were to spread out saying that Fang Xingjian had repented and agreed to go under the wings of the Holy Orison because of his suggestion, how much respect would he gain?

It would be a legendary story of a teacher and a student!

For someone like Edger, who valued his reputation a lot, how could he not be overjoyed?

However, faced with Edger's judgemental words, before Edger even had the chance to feel happy for a second, Fang Xingjian stomped down on his chest. With a bang, Fang Xingjian's kick sent Edger flying out of the crowd.

He mumbled in annoyance, "Long-winded."

After going through tough training for the past three months, how much had his strength increased? How fast was he now? Moreover, he had stepped into the realm of Heaven's Perception and his vision of things within a ten meter radius was much clearer than if he were to see with the naked eye. With all these, combined with the Unparalleled Sword Intent, he had aimed and hit on Edger's flaw in just an instant.

Edger was not on his guard at all. Who would have thought that Fang Xingjian would attack him before so many aristocrats? Who would have thought that Fang Xingjian would be so bold?

He was stunned at the moment when he was attacked and only managed to regain his senses when he collided against a table, all sorts of food and drinks splattering on him.

But everything was too late. Even if he used his Reduced Force Field to get rid of the rubbish around him, he was already fully drenched, and there was even a large footprint on his shirt where he had been kicked in the chest.

Hundreds of aristocrats in the area looked at him as if their eyes were all lasers with filled with great damaging prowess. For a person like Edger who loved his reputation so much, to have been humiliated before majority of Great Western City's aristocrats was a great disgrace. Consumed by embarrassment and anger, his face had turned flush red. He was unwilling to stay there for even one more second.

He let out a furious bellow and dashed out of the hall, and out of the manor, not daring to look any of the aristocrats in the eye.

However, his actions had not attracted too much attention. After Fang Xingjian carefully considered it, he replied, “My limit is two years. Within two years, I must definitely leave the mountain.”

Yuelun shook his head. “There’s been no exceptions in the Church of Universal Truth.”

Fang Xingjian shrugged, “Then I can only say that I’m sorry, and I can’t go with you to learn in the Sacred Mountain.”

It was then when Valen finally found the courage to interrupt, “Fang Xingjian, are you crazy? You’re rejecting the Guardian King?” He quickly told Master Yuelun, “He’s not in the right frame of mind. He must have gone crazy after all the training he went through. Please let him think through it carefully again.”

However, Fang Xingjian was unfazed. Master Yuelun frowned as he looked at him, that familiar feeling slightly dragging him into a faint trance.

He smiled and said, “Since that’s the case, I won’t push it. We’ll leave everything to fate.”

When David saw this, he was extremely excited. He now thought that Fang Xingjian was truly beyond redemption. To think that he would reject such a good opportunity and end up offending Master Yuelun!

The banquet’s host, Hathaway, also frowned slightly, feeling that this Fang Xingjian truly did not know any better, to have ruined the perfectly good atmosphere.

Astral Ancestor’s grand disciple looked at Fang Xingjian with interest and smiled as if he was looking at a weirdo, ‘Interesting, interesting.

‘Haha, this Fang Xingjian is doomed.

‘To think that a blind man would dare be so arrogant... To think that he would reject the Guardian King’s invitation...

‘This b*stard. If he’ll also participate in this Regional Selection, I’ll definitely kill him for his sin of having undermined the Church of Universal Truth.’

Just then, Fang Xingjian spoke again, “May I ask where the Governor is? I wish to participate in the upcoming Regional Selection but I was late for the registration.”

Hearing Fang Xingjian’s words, everyone looked at him as if they were looking at a fool. To think that an idiot who had rejected a Divine level expert, a blind man, a Knight who was late for the registration, would dare to think of participating in the Regional Selection!

Everyone was waiting for Governor Devitt’s reply, and were anticipating how he would humiliate this Fang Xingjian.

Chapter 203 Prove

Governor Devitt had stood up for Fang Xingjian in the past, but that was because the other party had displayed an extraordinary talent.

Now, however, Fang Xingjian was just a blind man. What right did he have to ask for the governor's help? Moreover, Fang Xingjian had rejected the Holy Orison's invitation right before so many people. If Devitt were to easily agree to his request, would he not be going against Yuelun?

Of course, most importantly, Fang Xingjian had been late. Judging on this fact alone, logic was not on his side.

Therefore, Devitt only smiled and said, "Xingjian, I understand how you feel, but there's a deadline to the registration. This is the rule. The content of the competition for this Regional Selection will be announced in the Hundred Blossom Banquet today. The content has been planned out based on the registered number of candidates and we can't change it easily."

David threw a glance at Lilia and smiled, "This is the person you like? He's not only a fool, but also a good-for-nothing. Take a good look here to see him being humiliated by everyone."

Lilia was not willing to accept it, but her gaze when looking at Fang Xingjian was also filled with pity.

But just as Devitt had finished his words and Fang Xingjian was frowning, Valen immediately stood out and said, "Sir, although Fang Xingjian was late, he has already stepped into the realm of Heaven's Perception. Please allow him to participate in this Regional Selection on this account."

When they heard the words 'Heaven's Perception', everyone present once again stared at Fang Xingjian in astonishment, as if they were getting to know him all over again.

The events today were filled with twists and turns, bringing shock after shock. First, it was the appearance of the Divine level Holy Orison's chief disciple, who then mentioned that he wanted to invite Fang Xingjian to cultivate on the Sacred Mountain. However, Fang Xingjian unexpectedly rejected him and then mentioned that he wanted to register to take part in the Regional Selection, despite being late.

When everyone thought that he would be unable to participate, there was the shocking news that he had stepped into the realm of Heaven's Perception.

The whole situation was akin to sitting on a roller coaster, abruptly moving up and down, and constantly agitating all the aristocrats' eyeballs.

"What?!" David's eyes were wide-open, as if they were about to pop out. He stared at Fang Xingjian, unable to understand how he could have attained Heaven's Perception in a mere few months.

Shadow Death God Anderson and the Divine level expert's grand disciple also looked at Fang Xingjian in surprise when they heard that.

Hoult received a peeled grape from a young lady next to him and smiled, "Oh? Great Western Region is truly filled with talents this time around. To think that there's already two geniuses who have stepped into Heaven's Perception."

Wei Leng had gone through a drastic change mid-life, which had brought him great devastation. Only then did he attain Heaven's Perception. He did not pay much heed toward all the commotion in the hall, simply sitting quietly in a corner, drowning in his own grief.

Most of the people had similar reactions – they were all in shock, hints of disbelief reflecting in their eyes.

Fang Xingjian was too young. What talent did he have to be able

to attain Heaven's Perception at such a young age even before participating in the Regional Selection? Having a splendid talent was not enough to describe this. Even Wei Leng had accumulated decades of cultivated experience and had encountered a drastic event before suddenly comprehending it.

Of course, with the prerequisite that it was true.

Therefore, when Devitt's gaze flickered a little, someone tactfully stood out to say what Devitt had wanted to say.

It was the green-haired young aristocrat who was known as Young Master Gable, and who had followed Fang Xingjian over.

Gable looked at Fang Xingjian with suspicion, asking, "You said that you've attained Heaven's Perception? Prove it."

Just then, a cry rang out. It was Lilia. David had focused all his attention onto Fang Xingjian and accidentally allowed Lilia escape with her monstrous strength.

Almost at the same time that Lilia let out the cry, Fang Xingjian moved.

Although he was blind, and the Heaven's Perception only allowed him to sense things within a ten meter radius, the Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash alone allowed him to retain the ability of controlling the movements of the atmosphere and sensing things within a hundred meter radius through them.

Therefore, right from the start, he had been clear about how many people were standing in each area of the hall. And with his extremely sharp hearing, Lilia's shout also allowed Fang Xingjian to identify her in an instant.

With a flash, he appeared behind Lilia, grabbed her, and then turned toward David by relying on his Heaven's Perception.

"Lilia? Why are you here as well?" Saying that, Fang Xingjian had already noticed Lilia's bruise through Heaven's Perception. He did not feel any pain, but he did feel anger. Fang Xingjian slowly

turned to face David.

Lilia hugged Fang Xingjian tightly, and buried her head into his chest just like a young child. The corners of her lips curled up uncontrollably, as an indescribable happiness filled her heart.

‘How weird. Why is it that my heart feels so, so sweet when I’m hugging Teacher? It’s as if I’ve eaten honey.’

When David saw Lilia hugging Fang Xingjian with a blissful expression, his eyes turned blood-red as he glared at Fang Xingjian. Seeing that everyone was watching, and also being unwilling to take a step back, he broke into a smile with a thick aristocrat feel, “Fang Xingjian, Genius Fang, Lilia is my fiancée. I don’t think it’s good for you to be hugging her like this.”

“Not good?” Fang Xingjian’s said in a soft voice, and looked at the green-haired Gable, asking, “Didn’t you guys ask me to prove that I’ve attained Heaven’s Perception? Then I’ll use this guy to prove it” he said, pointing a finger at David.

Ignoring how David’s countenance had turned grim, Fang Xingjian said to David, “I’m going to attack you. Try and see if you can escape.”

This was the Hundred Blossom Banquet, a place where countless aristocrats and geniuses were gathered. David had proclaimed himself to be a promising candidate for the top five positions in the Regional Selection. In no way would he let himself be humiliated. At Fang Xingjian’s words, he laughed coldly, and, taking a step forward, he released a majestic aura from his body, sending it at Fang Xingjian.

This was the Killing technique in which David had been putting great effort and years of cultivation – One Man Army. It emphasized the cultivation of the practitioner’s aura and allowed one to use it to suppress enemies. It was a mean to either spiritually or mentally attack enemies.

If it went a level higher, the practitioner would be able to directly control the atmospheric pressure and to suppress opponents with it, pinning them down on the ground without the possibility to get back up on their feet.

When ordinary Knights were faced with the pressure of his aura, they were usually robbed of their sanity. They would be controlled, just like how Lilia had just been under his control, unable to speak. It was a feeling akin to sleep paralysis.

Even if the opponents were not robbed of their sanity, they felt tied down because of the the pressuring aura, unable to unleash even half of their powers.

His highest record was punching out a horrifying atmospheric pressure and pinning down seven Knights on the ground, who ended up on all fours and unable to get back up for three whole hours.

But what kind of a character was Fang Xingjian? He was someone who would not falter in the least when he was facing the Divine level expert Li Shuanghua or Conferred Knight Jackson. How could he possibly falter before David?

Fang Xingjian did not say anything. He released Lilia and slowly started walking toward David.

Everyone in the area immediately made way, looking at the two of them as if they were watching a show. Martial arts was highly valued in the Empire, and those in the upper echelons were mostly either Knights or Conferred Knights. It was only too common for people to have disagreements in gatherings, which eventually ended up in fights. Everyone was used to scenes like this, and so no one tried to stop them. They all looked at Fang Xingjian and David, making guesses on who would be winning the fight.

David did not show any signs of weakness either. He punched with both fists, sending two forces at Fang Xingjian, as if two blocks of mountain had appeared out of nowhere. They were

shaped by both his aura and atmospheric pressure, exerting both mental and physical pressure on his opponent.

Chapter 204 Color

As Fang Xingjian was being suppressed and having his body restrained by the atmosphere, he suddenly stopped in his tracks. What seemed like snapping sounds resounded in the air, as if the air itself had snapped in two like some kind of steel product.

Seeing Fang Xingjian stopping in his tracks, David grinned and thought to himself, ‘Hmph, no matter how fast your speed is, the atmosphere between space areas is ever existing. With my One Man Army, the aura impact dealt to your mind takes but an instant to attack. Are you able to dodge it?’

Thinking this, David clenched his palms fiercely, and explosive sounds rang out. The atmospheric pressure on Fang Xingjian felt even heavier, and he felt as if each inch of his skin was being pushed down on by a mountain.

David coldly said, “Fang Xingjian, if you surrender now, I’ll let you go. Otherwise, don’t blame me for being vicious.”

Hearing that, Fang Xingjian lifted his head to look at David, revealing a disdainful smile.

“I’m coming over. If you can stop me, try it.”

The next moment, Ether Sword Ripples abruptly shot out, slashing the surrounding . At the same time, Boundaries Negation was also activated, and with a single step forward he was already before David.

David reacted very quickly. Although he did not understand how Fang Xingjian could have escaped his suppression, the moment when Fang Xingjian disappeared he automatically sent out both his fists, causing explosions in the air. The endless atmospheric pressure was like a thousand gates, pressing down shut right before his eyes.

This move, Atmospheric Door, provided an extremely sturdy

defence and David had even used this to fend off a ballista attack before.

However, almost at the same moment he had released the Atmospheric Door, Fang Xingjian's fingers, like ghosts, directly tore through space and pierced through the weakest spot on the door, aiming for David's head.

With the enhancement obtained through the Unparalleled Sword Intent, Fang Xingjian could even slash through an Inferior Divine Weapon with his bare hands now, let alone David's Atmospheric Door.

David shouted in surprise and leaned his head backward. Putting his palms together, countless atmospheric currents pressed down on his body, creating an extremely tight shield over it and protecting it.

However, although the defensive powers of this Atmospheric Armor were amazing, they were also restricting David's movements. This was why although David was feeling very confident when he used this move, he also knew that there was no way he could defeat Fang Xingjian in this state.

"This Fang Xingjian is truly powerful. Could it be that he has really attained Heaven's Perception? If that's the case, then his vision would be even clearer than us who see things with our naked eyes. Furthermore, his sword technique is also extremely elusive. How on earth did he train?"

However, David was extremely confident in his Atmospheric Armor. He watched as Fang Xingjian pushed his fingers toward him again and again, only to have his speed reduced more and more once he was within three inches of David's body, and then to be pushed out by the high density air pressure.

Seeing this, David smiled even more confidently.

"Fang Xingjian, it's useless. Even a Knight using a level 9 Inferior

Divine Weapon would find it impossible to slash through my Atmospheric Armor. It's said to be the strongest defenses at the Knight level. Do you understand? This is the power of the atmosphere. This is the tremendous power of the world. Unless you've already stepped into second transition, it's impossible for you as a human to fight against the world's powers."

In the second transition, other than sensing information from ether particles, one could also borrow the powers from them. The power contained within the ether particles were limitless, and it represented the world's powers. However, Killing techniques which tapped into the energy of the ether particles were all cultivated by Conferred Knights, and were mostly gathered in Regional Academies. This was why Fang Xingjian had not learnt any of them before.

However, he had yet to give up. He lifted his hand, and streams of light appeared. He had activated the High Frequency Effulgence Weapon – Silver Fox. A longsword formed from silver-colored fog appeared in his hands.

"Oh? He already has an Effulgence Weapon at level 19, before even getting to the second transition?"

"So what if he has an Effulgence Weapon? David's Atmospheric Armor has once stood up against the combined attacks of twelve Knights. It's known to be indestructible amongst those below second transition."

"It's a pity, a pity. If Fang Xingjian had an Inferior Divine Weapon, he'd still have a chance. But it's impossible for him to slash through the Atmospheric Armor with his bare hands."

Divine level expert's grand disciple Hoult shook his head and unconsciously stroked the longsword at his waist, saying, "This Atmospheric Armor is quite well-known. Even for me it could prove difficult if I wanted to break through it with my bare hands.

"This Killing technique One Man Army is truly magnificent. It

already has a feeling resembling the way a second transition Conferred Knight taps into the ether particles' energy."

Rota frowned, suddenly turning to look at Hamil and said, "Give him the Superior Divine Weapon."

"What?" Hamil was stunned, and did not manage to react. It was the Superior Divine Weapon Huang Lin had requested Governor Devitt to forge. Thanks to Edger, it was now on loan to Hamil.

When Hamil heard Rota's words, he frowned with obvious reluctance.

Governor Devitt and his wife also shook their heads, obviously thinking that it was impossible for Fang Xingjian to break through the shield.

Just when everyone was thinking that it would be impossible for Fang Xingjian to break through the Atmospheric Armor, the person in question made his move. Right before everyone's eyes, the fog-like High Frequency Effulgence Weapon, Silver Fox, softly thrust out and landed directly on the Atmospheric Armor.

The high frequency tremors, supported by the Unparalleled Sword Intent, sent extremely terrifyingly sharp auras into the air, tearing through layers of atmosphere. And then, under David's shocked gaze, it slashed through his Atmospheric Armor and tapped on David's body.

Almost at the same moment when the Atmospheric Armor broke, the tremendous changes in air pressure caused a massive amount of air explosions to scatter outward in all directions.

Amidst the waves of explosive air, David took the opportunity to retreat tens of meters. Only then did he look at Fang Xingjian, badly shaken. In the next moment, he laughed out loud, "No one has ever broke through my Atmospheric Armor before. This is why no one knows that after it's been broken, it still isn't the end. There's also a series of explosions, so the repelling force of the air

currents will backlash against my opponent.”

He then put his palms together again, reactivating his Atmospheric Armor and firmly protecting himself.

“So how is it, Fang Xingjian? Do you still want to waste time attacking?”

Just then, Fang Xingjian’s voice came ringing out from the smoke and dust. “I can easily slash through something like the Atmospheric Armor. I can easily slash through those explosive air currents as well.”

“So what?” David said with great confidence. “As long as you slash through my Atmospheric Armor, you’ll be attacked by the impact of the waves. When you’re done going through them, I will have already activated my Atmospheric Armor once again. There’s no way that you can break through my defence.”

When all the smoke and dust had cleared up, Fang Xingjian threw him a cold glare and turned to walk away. He turned to the green-haired Gable and asked, “That should be enough, right? This should be sufficient to prove that I’ve attained Heaven’s Perception.”

Just as David was feeling that something was odd, laughter broke out in the hall. A few aristocratic ladies pointed to David, laughing so hard that they could not keep their backs straight.

David was stunned for a moment. Then, he suddenly reacted and looked at himself. He saw that his pants had been torn to shreds, revealing his underwear.

He then felt his head, and found that it was covered in blood. Fang Xingjian had already written four words on his head, with his Ether Sword Ripples.

The words ‘Yellow Underwear’.

David’s underwear was yellow in color.

The moment Fang Xingjian had slashed through the Atmospheric Armor, he had sent ten streams of Ether Sword Ripples to, tear up David's clothes and to carve the words on his forehead.

It was impossible for one to discern colors by listening to the sound of wind. Being able to discern colors with one's eyes closed was something only attainable through Heaven's Perception.

It was also impossible for David to reveal the color of his underwear only to help Fang Xingjian. This had removed all possibilities of cheating.

Almost the same time when David felt these changes, a surge of vital energy and blood gushed up to his head.

'Burning shame.' These words kept appearing in David's mind, as if he was going to die of shame and humiliation in that very moment. He dashed out of the place, not daring to stay and allow other people to see how he looked.

The words carved on his head were a humiliation which he would remember forever.

When he turned to look at Fang Xingjian, his mind was brimming with killing intent. It was obvious that he now considered Fang Xingjian his lifelong enemy.

Chapter 205 The Revelation

Seeing Fang Xingjian ridiculing David, many people laughed. However, regardless of whether they were laughing or not, their gazes were filled with deep astonishment as they looked at Fang Xingjian.

Heaven's Perception, and the ability to slash through David's Atmospheric Armor with Effulgence Weapon at first transition level? Countless people were curiously guessing what special effects Fang Xingjian's Effulgence Weapon had. To think that it could slash through the Atmospheric Guard which was well-known for its defence!

Green-haired Gable was also staring with eyes wide-open and mouth agape at what Fang Xingjian had done. When he saw Fang Xingjian walking toward him, he unconsciously took a few steps back before he gulped and said, "You're good!" He then put up his thumb up for Fang Xingjian, saying, "I've got to hand it to you for actually slashing through David's Atmospheric Armor."

David was an aristocrat genius who had quite a good reputation in Great Western City, someone a profligate son like Gable utterly detested. However, David's ability was astonishing, and he also had a strong background. Moreover, Gable knew well how powerful David's Atmospheric Armor actually was.

He was even thinking that if the Atmospheric Armor's defence was even stronger than a level 9 Empire's Divine Weapon, with Fang Xingjian being able to slash through it, would it not mean that he would be able to slash through a level 9 Empire's Divine Weapon as if he were chopping up a melon or some kind of vegetable?

Thinking these, his gaze when looking at Fang Xingjian seemed to be filled with more favorable thoughts.

The aristocrats who had been explaining to their companions

how powerful the Atmospheric Armor was, and who had confidently said that it would be impossible for Fang Xingjian to slash through it, now all felt embarrassed, not daring to face their partners' doubtful gazes.

However, Devitt smiled. Another genius had risen under his rule, so how could he not feel happy? He nodded to Fang Xingjian and said, "Excellent, excellent, excellent. When I saw you last time, I knew that you were a person of great talent. I felt that your loss of sight was a pity, but to think that until now when we've met again not only did you not waste your life away, but you've actually put in more effort and progressed even more. You've even attained Heaven's Perception earlier than other people!

"Since you've already attained Heaven's Perception, then you'll definitely have no problems stepping into the second transition. I'll make an exception for your registration even though you were late. His Majesty will not blame me for this. On the other hand, if I were to insist against it, I'll just be seen as stubborn and obstinate." He gave it some thought, then said, "Valen."

Fatty Valen bowed, grinning, and waiting for Governor Devitt's instructions.

"Help Fang Xingjian settle the issue with the registration. Just tell them that it's under my command."

"Yes." Valen smiled and nodded, then winked at Fang Xingjian.

Lilia suddenly pounced on Fang Xingjian and hugged from the back. She happily said, "Teacher, I knew you were the best! You're the strongest! I knew it!"

From afar, Kirst's City Lord saw everything that had happened in the hall and sighed. He had not expected that Fang Xingjian would not only overcome the challenge of his loss of sight, but actually return in even greater glory, having attained Heaven's Perception and a Divine level expert's admiration.

Next to Kirst's City Lord, a slightly balding middle-aged man asked, "Is this how you teach your daughter?"

Kirst's City Lord smiled. The person next to him was Mongul City's City Lord, David's father. Having seen his son going through such humiliation, he was clearly unhappy.

This Mongul City's City Lord had started from the bottom, with nothing to his name. After becoming a Knight, he had joined the army, fighting his way up to success. After being discharged from the army, he was recommended for enrolment in the Mongul Academy. From there on, he managed to pass through the Regional Selection and became a Conferred Knight.

After many years, he had not only become a City Lord, but had also strengthened Mongul City, building it akin to a sturdy metal bucket. Even more impressive were his scheming abilities and his management skills. Twenty years ago, he had married the daughter of an aristocrat from the Imperial Capital, and from then on he had received the support of a great aristocratic clan in the Imperial Capital.

Just as Kirst's City Lord was about to give an explanation, he saw Lilia's pure and innocent smile. He sighed in his heart. How long had it been since he had last seen Lilia so happy?

He sighed and thought to himself, 'When a girl is of age, they'll be married off. Wife, our Lilia has unknowingly grown up.'

A slight smile appeared on the corner of his lips as he replied, "What's there to say when David's skill cannot match up to others? Why, do you also want to have a match with me?"

It was obvious from his attitude that he was going to support Fang Xingjian.

Hearing that, a hint of fury flashed in the eyes of Mongul's City Lord, "Alright, alright, alright. So this is your choice? We'll see about that." With that, he left. He wanted to quickly look for David

and discuss how to secretly attack Fang Xingjian in the Regional Selection.

If they did not do this, David and their clan would be the laughingstock of Great Western City's aristocrats for the next few years, or even more than ten years after the event. This was something he could not accept.

The banquet continued after all the issues had been settled. However, the majority of the people now had their attention turned to Fang Xingjian. Many aristocratic young ladies ran up to Fang Xingjian, hoping to get to know him better.

However, Lilia was like a small beast protecting its food, chasing away all those coquettish b*tches, until Rota came up together with Hamil and Ralph.

Both Hamil and Ralph appeared slightly uncomfortable when they looked at Fang Xingjian.

Fang Xingjian turned to Hamil with his eyes closed and asked, "My sword is with you, right?"

Hamil felt rather awkward as he nodded. Although it was not his idea to begin with, and the sword had been given to him through Edger's decision, he had still been using the Superior Devine Weapon for a few months. Thinking of how Fang Xingjian had already attained Heaven's Perception and how it was almost a sealed deal for him to become a Conferred Knight, he started to feel increasingly embarrassed.

The genius whose back view he could still see in the past had now cast him far behind.

Hearing Fang Xingjian's question, Hamil immediately replied, "I'll get someone to send it over tomorrow."

Fang Xingjian nodded, then turned to Rota and said, "You're not bad. You haven't been wasting the past few months."

He then threw a glance toward Ralph and shook his head,

“You’re better off not participating in the selection. At least half the Knights in this hall are stronger than you.”

Hearing this, Ralph’s countenance turned grim. However, he did not dare to raise his hand against Fang Xingjian, and so he simply left in anger.

Just then, a young man dressed in a black robe and encompassed in shadows walked toward him. It was Anderson, the one who had transitioned into a Shadow Death God.

Fang Xingjian turned to him and asked, “What do you want?”

An icy-cold killing intent encompassed everyone with Anderson’s arrival, making Rota and the others feel that the hair all over their bodies was standing to stand up. It was just like the animals’ instinctive reaction when they encountered their deadly enemies.

Anderson revealed an icy-cold smile and said, “Nothing much. I’m just here to take a look at my opponent this time. Although there’s many people participating in the Regional Selection, there’s only a few whom I can call my opponents. Hoult, who has a Divine level grandmaster is one; Wei Leng whose luck left is another, and now there’s you.”

Anderson smiled as he continued, “However, you’re only slightly stronger than Wei Leng, and a lot weaker compared to Hoult and myself.” He then patted Fang Xingjian on the shoulder with the arrogance of an older person. “I hope you work hard.”

Looking at the departing Anderson, Lilia asked, “What was his intention for coming over?”

“It’s just a case of chuunibyou [1].” Looking at everyone’s puzzled expressions, Fang Xingjian had no choice but to explain, “It means that the person is snobbish.”

With this, everyone understood. Right then the Governor’s wife, the host of the Hundred Blossom Banquet, Hathaway, stood on the hall’s stage and clapped to get everyone’s attention.

She smiled and said, “Has everyone had a good time today? It’s about time for the Hundred Blossom Banquet’s custom, the announcement of this Regional Selection’s competition events.”

[1] A Japanese slang term which roughly translates to “Middle School Second Year Syndrome”. People with chuunibyou either act like a know-it-all adult and look down on real ones, or believe that they have special powers, unlike others.
<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Chuunibyou>

Chapter 206 Speech

As Hathaway spoke, all the Knights who were participating in the upcoming Regional Selection became agitated.

Other than the arena battle in the final round and the Pantheon Monument Observation in the second to last round, the first two stages in every Regional Selection were planned out by the Governor. It could be said that each region's Regional Selection was different from the others.

This was also to ensure that Knights would not specially train themselves in order to meet the examination requirements, meanwhile ending up losing sight of what that was important.

Hathaway spoke gently, "The first stage in this Regional Selection is 'Slashing the Heavenly Pillar'."

Slashing the Heavenly Pillar, true to its name, was to attack a gigantic pillar made of metal alloy.

This metal alloy was a newly developed forging material. Not only was it extremely sturdy, with resistance against both fire and acid, but it even had self-recovery ability. No matter what kind of attack it received, as long as it was put under sunlight, it would recover in but a few seconds. It was a material at the Divine Equipment level.

This was actually made from a piece of Divine level bone remains that Governor Devitt had obtained when he was young. He initially wanted to use this piece of bone remains to forge an invincible item of Divine Remains Equipment, an armor with self-recovery abilities.

Governor Devitt lived up to his name as a master blacksmith. Even Huang Lin had come to ask for his help to forge a Divine Weapon.

The armor with self-recovery abilities was successfully forged,

but at the same time it had ended up in a failure.

He had succeeded in developing such a material. However, its self-recovery ability was too powerful, and it was permanently fixed in the shape of a metal pillar. No matter how much he had tried to reform it, attempting to turn it into an armor, trying to make it into a sword... it always reverted to its original state within a few seconds. It was impossible for him to forge any kind of equipment with it.

And he did not have a second bit of bone remains from that Divine level expert which he could use to forge into the equipment he was aiming for.

This time around, Governor Devitt simply decided to use it for the first stage in the Regional Selection.

This stage, Slashing the Heavenly Pillar, would be supervised by Governor Devitt himself. With his cultivation level of second transition level 29, and an ether synchronization rate of 100%, he clearly had a complete understanding of the degree of damage dealt to the alloy pillar. Thus, he would be able to give an accurate score to each of the students.

Those in the top one hundred would move on to the next stage.

The second stage was named 'Contention for the Top Tier'. All one hundred examinees would be put into a maze, and each of them could only stay on guard in the spot they were allocated, unallowed to move more than ten meters away from the respective spot. As for the specific location, based on the results of the previous stage, the examinees would be able to take turns in choosing their preferred spot.

The whole maze was filled with ferocious beasts of various levels. They would continuously attack the examinees, so the goal was to survive the attacks. Of course, examinees were forbidden from attacking each other. However, using tricks and schemes to indirectly force the other participants to be eliminated was

acceptable. Only direct attacks were forbidden.

Examinees who voluntarily gave up, lost the ability to fight, or were unable to kill any ferocious beasts after five minutes had passed, would all be eliminated and then brought out by the invigilating Conferred Knights.

The last thirty examinees who managed to stay on would be able to enter the third stage and have the right to participate in the Pantheon Monument Observation.

In the third stage, Pantheon Monument Observation, examinees' results would depend on how much of the amount of Killing techniques in the Pantheon Monument could the individual comprehend within twelve hours.

They would demonstrate their comprehensions before the examiners, including the Governor, who would each give a score. Those in the top sixteen would enter the last round, the arena battle.

The arena battle was split into four elimination rounds, where the top ten to pass the Regional Selection would be chosen.

This was the whole process of the Regional Selection. Hearing everything through, many peoples' eyes were filled with fighting spirit, each of them carefully thinking about the content of the first two rounds.

At the same time, Hathaway smiled and said, "The reason why the Hundred Blossom Banquet takes place is because we hope to see an endless flow of geniuses in the Empire, like how endless flowers blossom every year. This year, due to his Majesty's brilliance, we have many talents far surpassing those of previous years."

"Shadow Death God Anderson.

"Astral Ancestor's descendent, Hoult.

"The late bloomer with extraordinary resolution, Wei Leng.

“And of course, there’s also the Windstorm Sword Hero, Fang Xingjian, whom I’ve just met today.

“All of you have ended up participating in the Regional Selection in the same year. If any of you were to appear in the Regional Selections of previous years, you would probably have gained powerful leadership abilities by now.

“I am looking forward to your performances.”

With each line Hathaway spoke, everyone turned to look at the four whose names had been mentioned. The four of them instantly had instantly attracted countless gazes.

Hathaway continued, “Then, now we’ll proceed to the final component of our Hundred Blossom Banquet. We would like to invite all four of the abovementioned examinees to come on stage to give a speech.”

Steward Setque walked up behind Fang Xingjian and said in a soft voice, “Young Master Xingjian, later on, please go up to say a few words. It can be a casual talk about things like your goals, dreams and aspirations.” He smiled and said, “This is also to boost the examinees’ morales.”

Shadow Death God Anderson was the first to dash on stage. The young man in his teens put on an expression as if he had experienced a lot in life as he looked at the crowd. He calmly said, “Since I must share, I’ll go straight in.

“My dream is to be able to kill a Divine level expert. Therefore, I’m bent on taking the title of Regional Champion this time around.

“Remember this day. In the future, you’ll feel proud for the rest of your life to have heard my speech today.”

With that, he left the crowd in shock. Anderson’s face suddenly blushed before he turned into a lump of black shadows and completely disappeared.

Lilia shrugged and said, “Why do I feel awkward after hearing his speech?”

‘This is what they call chuunibyou,’ Fang Xingjian thought to himself.

Hathaway spoke rigidly, “Hoult, you go next.”

With a tap of his foot, the graceful Hoult leapt up to the stage. His actions were light as a fairy, as if he was a god from the heavens. His actions caused a series of screams to rise from the crowd of young aristocrat ladies.

Hearing the screams, Hoult put up his hand and said, “Thank you, everyone, for your warm welcome. I love you too.”

With his words, the screams grew louder. Hathaway had no choice but to cough softly to allow silence to fall over the hall.

Hoult continued, “This time around, the reason I’ve come to Great Western City is primarily because I’ve been instructed by my master to come with a keen mind to learn. My hope is to have exchanges in teachings, as well as to spar...”

Hoult was clearly very experienced in such situations, and the rest of the things he shared were mostly by the book. Hathaway nodded with satisfaction.

After Hoult came down, it was the gloomy-looking Wei Leng’s turn. However, it was only after Hathaway had called out to him for three times that he went up with great reluctance.

On stage, he said with a cold expression, “I don’t have anything to say.” With that, he left.

Hathaway’s countenance turned grim as she shook her head, ‘The few seeds this year are really problems after problems.’

It was finally Fang Xingjian’s turn. As Fang Xingjian headed up to the stage, Lilia cheered loudly. Rota, Hamil and the others were also staring at the stage, feeling a sense of pride.

Looking down at the crowd below the stage, Fang Xingjian gave it some thought before saying, “Never surrender, never yield, never compromise, never fall back. This is what makes a true Knight.

“I hope that we can give mutual encouragement based on these terms.”

Hathaway smiled. Although it was too short, at least it was normal. She took the lead to applaud and finally said, “Everyone, there’s fifteen days until the start of the Regional Selection. Please be prepared and don’t be late.” With the last part, she threw Fang Xingjian a teasing glance.

Chapter 207 The Final Rest and Reorganization

Once the banquet ended, Yuelun boarded his horse carriage, where a lady dressed in white was waiting. When she saw Yuelun, she could not help but ask, “Master [1], what’s so special about that Fang Xingjian? Why do you seem to be so distracted after meeting him?”

Yuelun laugh bitterly and said, “You’re able to tell as well?” He shook his head. He had not wanted to mention this, but after some thought, he knew that she would eventually find out about it.

Therefore, he said, “Fang Xingjian looks a little like that person.”

“That person?” The lady in white clothes frowned and said, “Which person is that?”

Yuelun looked out of the window, his tone filled with the endless tiredness of one who had experienced a lot in life as he replied, “The person who disappeared sixteen years ago.”

In the beginning, the lady dressed in white still did not react. But in the next moment, a hint of terror flashed on her face, as if the person Yuelun had just mentioned had boundless magical charm.

The young lady dressed in white shivered as she said, “They look alike?”

Yuelun shook his head, replying, “It’s not just alike. They look exactly the same.”

“How is that possible? That person should not have any blood kin or brothers.” The young lady dressed in white had her eyes wide-open as she said in a trembling voice, “Could it be...”

An extremely terrifying and unbelievable thought appeared in her mind.

She looked at Master Yuelun and asked, “Master, does

Grandmaster know about this?" The Grandmaster she was referring to was, naturally, the Holy Orison.

Yuelun shook his head and said, "I don't know. But a great change will befall us in the future. If those honorable people and the other Guardian Kings in the north found out about Fang Xingjian, the Empire will probably have a lot of things to deal with."
“

...

One day, two days, three days...

The days passed by just like that. Ferdinand stayed in the same inn as Rota and the others. They had even come across the other participants in the Regional Selection from Kirst. There were also those who were there to observe, like Ferdinand and Anthony.

Fang Xingjian's name had spread like wildfire after the Hundred Blossom Banquet, and his fame seemed to have soared overnight. In the various gambling stalls which opened bets for the Regional Champion, Fang Xingjian's name, along with the other three, had become the hot favorites for clinching the title of Regional Champion.

Of course, this also meant many people, including aristocrats, merchants, and Knights now wanted to get close to Fang Xingjian, and to build a relationship with him.

However, during this period of time, Ferdinand was staying in the inn's private room, not having taken a single step out. All the people who came to visit were stopped by Ferdinand, Robert and Anthony, who had come to observe the competition.

The day for the Regional Selection finally arrived. That morning, Ferdinand yawned as he lay on the sofa, occasionally glancing at the room.

Sitting opposite him were Robert and Anthony, both of them seemingly out of sorts.

Ferdinand grinned and asked, “You’re still thinking about the bets?”

Anthony looked at Ferdinand, apparently upset, and asked, “How can you keep so calm? You’ve just bet all three thousand gold on Xingjian winning the title of Regional Champion! Even if you’re very confident in Xingjian, don’t you feel nervous at all?”

Robert also nodded in agreement. Both Anthony and himself had not dared to bet any more than five hundred gold. He could not understand why Ferdinand seemed to be so relaxed.

After the parietal bones’ auction, they had each received three thousand gold from Ferdinand. Although they had used some of it for cultivation resources, they did not dare to spend it recklessly. In the end, Ferdinand incited them to place bets on the results of the Regional Selection.

They had struggled with the decision for a very long time, sometimes feeling that they had invested too little, sometimes feeling that they had invested too much. They were even more anxious than the examinees themselves.

Hearing their worry, Ferdinand shook his head and asked, “Has Xingjian ever lost before? Regardless if it’s his talent, character, or abilities, they are all such that I’ve never seen before in all my life. I’ve decided to bet everything on him.

“What about you guys? Have you come to a decision on that matter?”

What Ferdinand was referring to was his plan to drop out from Kirst Royal Academy and assist Fang Xingjian after he gained the Regional Champion title.

It was because, compared to cultivating in Kirst Academy, he felt that it was much more effective for him to come to Great Western City and assist Fang Xingjian, at the same time receiving his guidance. He also felt that this path would offer him a brighter

future.

However, not everyone could be as decisive as Ferdinand. Hearing his plan to drop out from the academy, people like Anthony and Robert, who highly valued the chance to learn in Kirst Academy, infatuated with the free training resources and allowances given to them, tended to slightly hesitate.

Ferdinand smiled. “Then I’ll leave the decision to you. No matter what, it’s your own choice. Neither Xingjian nor I will blame you for it.”

Just then, the door opened, and Fang Xingjian walked out of the room.

He no longer looked like the homeless man fifteen days ago. After washing up, his elegant face with a hint of determination shone once again. The fitting Knight attire presented his broad shoulders and thin waist perfectly, and his 1.9 meter height put out a strong pressuring aura.

Most importantly, after training privately for the past fifteen days, cleansing his spirit and regaining tiptop condition, his cultivation level had also progressed further.

During the past fifteen days, having as target the first stage in the Regional Selection, Slashing the Heavenly Pillar, he had fully focused on cultivating his Ether Divine Art, and bringing his High Frequency Effulgence Weapon – Silver Fox – to level 3. It had now reached a tremor rate of one thousand and five hundred times per second, yet again improving the power of his slash.

Moreover, he had gone all-out to temper his attributes. Now, the Rebirth Sword Technique his body automatically circulated daily could give him 20,000 potential points. It was two times the amount he could previously obtain.

After fifteen days, he had accumulated 300,000 potential points, and had evenly allocated them to his strength and reaction

attributes.

Therefore, Fang Xingjian's attributes had now become:

Name Fang Xingjian

Age 17

Occupation Windshadow Sword Divinity

Level 19

Strength 70+5

Agility 193+5

Reaction 81

Endurance 51

Flexibility 53

Ether Synchronization Rate 10%

The attributes above come into effect once the Sonido Sword Zephyr Waves is activated.

Due to Perfect Muscles, +5 in strength and agility (10% of the endurance attribute).

Skills / Techniques: Rebirth Sword Technique,

New Nine-Headed Dragon Sword Technique,

Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash,

Level 3 Ether Divine Art

Specialties: Genius Swordsmanship,

Elementary Survival Instinct,

Internal Healing,

Internal Training,

Sword Specialist,

High Agility Motion Vision,

Heightened Reflexes,
Perfect Muscles,
Elementary Berserkness,
Level 1 Unparalleled Sword Intent
Waves Level 7 Sonido Sword Zephyr Waves
Mental Cultivation Method Level 5 Universal Sword Dominance
Lunisolar

The moment he appeared, all the other doors also opened, as if similar spirits, junctures, or information had been stimulated. All the students from Kirst Academy, including Manny, Rota, Hamil, and Ralph, walked out. Their eyes were gleaming brightly. All of them had clearly brought their bodies to tiptop condition during the past fifteen days.

Fang Xingjian looked at Ferdinand and the others, then took the longsword Ferdinand gave him, smiled, and said, “Let’s go.”

The longsword he took was, of course, the one Hamil had dutifully returned, the level 20 Superior Remains Divine Weapons – Styx

[1] The ‘Master’ here refers to Teacher.

Chapter 208 Begin

Level 20 Superior Remains Divine Weapon – Styx. Just its material quality was something that ordinary Empire's Divine Weapons and Inferior Remains Divine Weapons would never be able to slash through.

Even Fang Xingjian himself could not deal any damage to it, at least, not by ordinary means. As for whether he could slash through it with a few hundreds streams of Ether Sword Ripples, he had not tried it, since he was no idiot.

Other than its unrivalled toughness and sharpness, Governor Devitt had also engraved the Styx with nine hundred and ninety-nine wind imprints. This was also something Fang Xingjian had specifically requested.

The Styx was 1.3 meters long, three fingers wide, and covered with densely packed prints, which looked like claw marks left behind by countless ghosts and monsters. With a light swing, it brought a sound resembling ten thousand shrieking ghosts. Of course, the purpose of his wind prints design was not to have a sound attack, like the Demoness' Howl; it was to amplify sword Qis.

If Fang Xingjian were to use this Styx to perform the Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash, controlling the atmosphere and sword Qis, he would be able to keep the sword Qis condensed up to a distance of one-hundred-and-eighty-meters away from him. The attack and damage prowess would also be greatly amplified, since any casual swing would release slashing sword Qis at supersonic speed.

Now, Fang Xingjian had two longswords attached as his waist – the Demoness' Howl and the Styx. He also had the Silver Dragon on his thigh.

Lilia, waiting by the inn's entrance, immediately ran up to Fang Xingjian when she saw him coming out.

“Teacher, you’ll definitely be the Regional Champion this time!” She clenched her small fists and said with excitement, “We’ll be cheering for you from the stands.”

Then all of them headed toward the competition grounds of the Regional Selection, the Regional Royal Academy of the Great Western Region, and the sacred grounds of countless Knights in the Great Western Region.

When they arrived at the academy’s entrance, its surroundings were already crowded, many examinees, family members, teachers, and students, waiting either to participate in the Regional Selection, or just to spectate. When Fang Xingjian saw this, he felt as if he was looking at the scene of a college entrance examination on Earth. No, it had an even higher importance.

However, although people were flooding the area, when Fang Xingjian arrived and people recognized him, they all unconsciously stepped aside, countless gazes watching him.

Many of them wanted to walk over and greet Fang Xingjian, but they were all politely stopped by Ferdinand and the others.

They had to be kidding. What was most important to Fang Xingjian right now was the Regional Selection. How could they allow these people to disturb him?

The group gradually left the crowd and headed for the academy’s entrance.

Very quickly, they met the gloomy-looking David. His head was wrapped in white cloth, as if he was trying to hide his face and to avoid being recognized.

Behind him there were two unordinary Knights exuding unfathomable auras.

When he saw Fang Xingjian, David glared at him and said, “Fang Xingjian, I’ll make this Regional Selection something you’ll remember for life. What you did yesterday will be your worst

lifelong regret.”

His tone was filled with exceptional hatred, jealousy and killing intent.

It was because since young he had never suffered humiliation. Now, all the aristocrats in Great Western City were treating him like a laughingstock. If he did not kill Fang Xingjian, he would never be able to walk with his head high for the rest of his life.

Therefore, with the help of his father, he had made all the required preparations. He was bent on targeting Fang Xingjian in this Regional Selection. Even if he did not kill him, he wanted to get him eliminated, and to ensure that he would be left unable to continue participating.

However, Fang Xingjian paid him no attention. Ferdinand went to stand before David and laughed loudly, “Lad, who are you? Why are you just blabbing about, saying whatever you want?”

David threw Ferdinand a cold glance, not paying him any heed, and simply turning to leave after having said his piece. He was clearly not willing to waste any more time squabbling.

For the past fifteen days before the Regional Selection, he had made too many preparations and had paid too much of a price just so that he could do Fang Xingjian in.

‘Fang Xingjian... This time around, no one will be able to save you.’

Someone next to them introduced David to Ferdinand. Laughing coldly, Ferdinand looked at David with a sly smile.

Thereafter, all the examinees waited at the entrance for about twenty minutes before the door of the Regional Academy slowly opened. All the examinees went up to register with their Knight medallion and Knight attire before entering the academy, ready for the examination.

The examination would be held over four days, one stage each

day. For the next four days, the examinees not only had to take the examination in the Regional Academy, but they would also had to live there.

Lilia stood outside, looking at the long queue, and said, “There’s so many people participating in the Regional Selection this year.”

“Of course,” Ferdinand said. “The prizes this year are too astonishing and they’ve dragged everyone out. I think the total is over five hundred participating Knights this year. That’s almost a third of the students in all twelve academies of the Great Western Region.”

He then smiled and said, “Let’s go to the stands.”

In order to encourage the development of martial arts, and at the same time keeping it fair, all four stages of the Regional Selection were open to the public.

Naturally, it also had a cost. Each seat was five gold, thus denying the possibility of any commoners attending. The audience was essentially only aristocrats.

Fang Xingjian took his number and followed the signs to a large training ground, waiting for all the other examinees to arrive. He looked at the stands, from where Lilia, Anthony and the others were waving at him.

Finally, after a total of five hundred and twelve examinees had arrived, the main examiner, Governor Devitt, walked in. The people following behind him included a man who seemed to be getting on in his years, and who was walking as if his eyes were closed. He was the Commissioner of Education, Luke.

There was also the capable-looking Department Head of Education, Yaris, who was about forty years old.

And finally, there was the middle-aged Deputy Governor Armstrong, who had a face covered in scars.

These were the four examinees for this Regional Selection, with

Governor Devitt as the main examiner. Although they were all influential characters, they still had to personally supervise and allocate scores during the Regional Selection. This went to show how strict the Empire was with the Grand Selections, and how highly regarded this event was.

Each Regional Selection was a very important reflection of their political achievements.

On another side, twelve Knights were working together to move a giant metal pillar into the training grounds.

With a loud bang, the metal pillar was thrown down to the floor, causing a slight earthquake.

However, after the pillar was smashed onto the surface, it did not bounce up in the least, but simply entered three inches deep into the ground. This showed how heavy it was, as well as how dense and strong it was.

Seeing this, the countenances of many Knights turned grim.

The next moment, Governor Devitt slowly said, “Then, we are officially starting this year’s Regional Selection. I won’t say much. Let the first stage, Slashing the Heavenly Pillar, begin! Examinee number one, please step forward.”

Chapter 209 Slashing the Heavenly Pillar (Part I)

Examinee number one was a middle-aged man with scarce hair on his head. He was from the northern side of the Great Western Region and was forty-five years old that year. He had failed seven consecutive Regional Selections and this was his last and final attempt. If he did not pass this time around, he would quietly stay in the north to be an instructor, taking on the role to nurture future generations of Knights.

Seeing the first examinee stepping forth, a young man and lady immediately shouted from the stands, “Daddy, do your best!”

The examinee smiled and waved at them as he walked up to the metal pillar.

The metal pillar was about two meters tall and a meter wide. Its surface was a deep matte black which did not reflect light at all, giving one the feeling of a deep abyss.

Surrounded by the four examiners, examinee number one became slightly nervous. Although the board members were all influential characters, given their reputation and cultivation levels, the scores would be credible and trustworthy. However, the examinees also felt under pressure from their presences.

Even so, examinee number one had already been through too many Regional Selections and was able to stabilize his breathing very quickly. He then drew out his sword, streams of flames appearing on its length.

One hundred degrees... Two hundred degrees... Three hundred degrees... All the way until it reached the high temperature of one thousand degrees. With a loud bellow, the middle-aged man sped up in an instant, stirring up a long stream of white air current. He became one with the sword, landing a harsh high-temperature

slash on the metal pillar, at a speed that transcended the speed of sound.

The violent air currents together with the high-temperature flame streams blew out in all directions, just like fireworks. Such terrifying damage prowess was akin to shooting out a cannonball.

However, when the smoke scattered to reveal the metal pillar, there was only a sunken mark of about an inch on it. The mark gradually disappeared within a few seconds, as if it had never been there in the first place.

Examinee number one stepped back with his hands full of blood, looking at this scene in disbelief.

Governor Devitt calmly assessed, “7 points.”

The other three examiners respectively graded him, “7 points.”

“7 points.”

“7 points.”

Although the four of them had each said a score, given that they all had Heaven’s Perception and could accept information from the ether particles within ten meters, each of them could accurately grasp the damage inflicted on the metal pillar, right down to the finest detail. This was why they had all given the same scores.

Examinee number one left with a dejected look. The other examinees were also wearing grim looks as they stared at the metal pillar.

“This thing is really too tough.”

“The damaging prowess of that number one is already much stronger than mine. To think that even he is only able to make this much damage...”

“That’s but of course! That thing was forged by Governor Devitt himself!”

Ferdinand shook his head as he looked at the stage, “What kind

of thing is that? Isn't it too strong? Will there be any examinees this year who will be able to break it completely?"

Kirst's City Lord suddenly appeared, ignoring the others' astonished gazes, and went on to share, "This thing was made by Governor Devitt from a piece of a Divine level expert's bone remains. Although he failed to turn it into a Divine Remains Equipment, its sturdiness is very close to one, or at least equivalent to a level 29 Superior Remains Divine Weapon.

in fact, if not for its self-recovery trait making it less sturdy than it ought to be, that number one could forget about leaving even a trace of mark."

"It's that amazing?" Ferdinand asked.

Lilia also started to feel worried. She forgot to be angry at her father and just asked, "Then does Teacher have a good chance of doing well in this stage?"

"He should have no problems getting into the top eleven, but he probably won't be the one with the best results." Kirst's City Lord shook his head and said, "Although this thing is very strong, it doesn't have the special effect of a Divine Weapon. Therefore, there's a flaw to its defence.

"And despite Fang Xingjian's extraordinary damage prowess, according to what I know, there's at least two people this year who have a higher damage prowess than him."

Ferdinand was cooperative and asked, "Who?"

Kirst's City Lord answered, "Of course, it's the Shadow Death God Anderson and that narcissist Hoult."

Seeing their puzzled expressions, Kirst's City Lord continued to explain, "Anderson's job, the Shadow Death God, has always been known to be the job with the strongest explosive force and greatest stealth abilities amongst all first transition jobs.

"Stealth, naturally, because he can turn into shadows as he

moves.

“And explosive force because the Shadow Death God allows one to perform a kind of corrosive shadow attack. It can immediately reduce the sturdiness of the targeted material. No matter the kind of Divine Weapon or treasured armor, if it only has a strong defence due to its material, it will inevitably be as fragile as paper.

“As for Hoult, I know that his Master has given him a level 29 Superior Divine Weapon – Crimson Fire.”

Naturally, a level 29 Superior Divine Weapon will be able to break this metal pillar.

Lilia, furious, said, “Isn’t this unfair?”

“Fair? Things like job skills and equipments are all a part of the Knight’s abilities.” Kirst’s City Lord continued, “Moreover, the people who aren’t even able to get into the top one hundred in this stage won’t even have the right to become Conferred Knights.

“Plus, the rankings in this stage will not affect the final rankings of the top ten in the Regional Selection.”

As the competition went on, things turned out just how Kirst’s City Lord had expected. Not a single Knight was able to leave a mark deeper than three inches on this metal pillar. The Knight who received the high score of 9.5 was a Prefectural Champion in his thirties.

Finally, under everyone’s anticipation, it was finally Shadow Death God Anderson’s turn.

He walked up with a disdainful look, saying with a smirk, “A bunch of useless bums. Let me show you what a real attack looks like.”

With that, he took a step forward, creating a series of afterimages as he charged right at the metal pillar, pressing one palm on it.

Job skill Shadow Coffin activated.

Immediately, black shadows encompassed the entire metal pillar. In the next moment, Anderson took out a dagger. It was the level 19 Inferior Divine Weapon Shadow Tooth. His academy had specially prepared it for him.

Killing technique – Piercing Sun.

Like a shooting star cutting across the sky, or like the sun piercing through the clouds, Anderson focused all his energies onto the Shadow Tooth. Then, with a spinning and piercing force, he thrust out.

The Shadow Coffin weakened the sturdiness of the targeted material, the Divine Weapon Shadow Tooth turned an enhanced force into a spinning one, and Piercing Sun allowed the user to instantaneously and explosively throw out this force.

After three consecutive explosions, Anderson's explosive prowess was brought to a whole new level.

With a crisp Kacha! sound, his whole arm and elbow sunk into the metal pillar. A tremendous cavity appeared on that metal pillar, almost boring halfway into it. It looked like a huge drilled hole.

Withdrawing his arm and looking at the metal pillar which had started to wriggle and recover slowly, Anderson's mouth twitched, "Tsk, I didn't get through it?"

With that, he left without turning back, as if he was not concerned with his grades in the least.

Other than giving their scores, it was also rare to see the few examiners commenting.

Governor Devitt said, "Focused strength into one point, great mastery of his job skill. Even a level 20 Conferred Knight would not dare to face this attack easily. 48 points."

The Commissioner of Education, who was so old that it seemed as if he was bound to die anytime was, just as Edger had said, one who

had always been supporting academies to be self-sufficient and get their own sponsorships.

He opened his mouth and weakly said, “It’s a killer move. In the future, after you move on into the second transition, there’ll definitely be a spot for you in the Imperial Capital. 48 points.”

The capable-looking Yaris smiled and said, “Not bad, lad. When I was your age, I was probably incapable of facing even a single attack of yours. Your ending movement is still a little bit off. I’ll give 47 points.”

Armstrong, fully covered in scars, said coldly, “Fast, accurate, vicious. It’s a move purely intended to kill, and it’s put in too much of an unfavorable position when used in Slashing the Heavenly Pillar. I’ll give you 49 points.”

Finally, under everyone’s astonished gazes, Anderson received a score of 48 points.

Chapter 210 Slashing the Heavenly Pillar

(Part II)

“This damage prowess is too astonishing!”

“Is this the power of a Shadow Death God? It’s impossible for those at Knight level to fend off against that!”

“It’s not just the Knights. Even Conferred Knights... If they don’t use their abilities, there’s no way they can fend this off.”

Everyone looked at Anderson in astonishment, horror, and disbelief.

Anderson smiled, revealing a proud look, as if he was a primary school kid who had just gotten full marks for his exams.

When he met Hoult’s gaze, he threw out his middle finger in contempt.

“This guy...” Hoult’s grip on the Crimson Fire tightened as he frowned.

On the other hand, the other seeded candidate Wei Leng seemed to be in a completely different world, nothing being able to perk his interest in the least.

Other than Anderson, none of the next participants were able to show such a powerful damage prowess, not even Wei Leng. Despite the fact that he had Heaven’s Perception, which gave him a keen sense of observation and a reaction ability which boosted his damaging powers, he had no powerful Killing techniques, and his explosive attack force was not comparable to that of someone like Anderson.

Devitt shook his head and said, “Wei Leng, you’ve really disappointed me. Have you been seriously cultivating after attaining Heaven’s Perception? These are still the same skills and techniques as before. Although your damage powers are already

much stronger than ordinary people, you shouldn't only be at this level. I'll give you 12 points."

The oldest amongst the four, the wrinkle-covered Commissioner of Education Luke said, "This performance does not showcase your talent. 12 points."

Yaris spoke with indifference, "Disappointing. 12 points."

Armstrong did not comment much either. He merely said outright, "Ordinary. 12 points."

In the end, Wei Leng only got 12 points.

"Sigh, to think that even though Wei Leng has attained Heaven's Perception, he's still unable to get anywhere near Anderson..."

"Although he has Heaven's Perception, before he reaches level 20 he'll only have an ether synchronization rate of 10% at most. It's impossible for him to identify the metal pillar's flaw."

"It's a pity. Although he has great talent, his damage powers and talent are not directly related."

"Mmmm, seems like that Fang Xingjian won't be able to get a high score either. The Windstorm Sword Hero has unparalleled speed and specializes in attacking while on the move. However, the damage and explosive powers are no match."

"That's right. Seems like the top will be disputed between Anderson and Hoult, who has yet to have his chance."

Hearing the crowd's comments, Lilia slightly clenched her fists, her face puffed up in fury. Kirst's City Lord pat her on the shoulders and said, "Lili, it's fine. The first stage is not something Fang Xingjian specializes in. It'll be fine in the second stage. The Windstorm Sword Hero specializes in fighting against multiple opponents."

Just as they were talking, Hoult appeared. Today, he was wearing an emerald-colored long-sleeved top, and was holding onto a

crimson-red treasure sword. His long hair flowed down casually, and he looked as if he was a fallen noble. The moment he stepped up, a bunch of young aristocratic ladies started screaming their heads off.

Hoult lightly smoothed his hair, bowing toward the four examiners, and drew out his sword.

It was as if there were streams of red light flashing in the crimson-red sheath. However, when the longsword was completely drawn out, even Fang Xingjian's brows rose.

Ferdinand and Lilia, who were looking toward the stage, as well as Rota and Hamil who were part of the competition, were all astonished.

To think that it was a longsword with no physical form, and that it purely burned endlessly, like flames!

A term immediately appeared in Fang Xingjian's mind, 'Laser sword?'

The level 29 Superior Divine Weapon Hoult was holding was a treasured sword similar to a laser sword.

As if satisfied with everyone's surprised gazes, Hoult revealed a slight smile. Then, with a low bellow accompanying the strong exertion of forces with both his arms, a violent heat wave surged forth. Everyone could feel the frantically surging temperatures, as if they had suddenly been transported into a desert.

Rota's pupils contracted as she stared at the Crimson Fire longsword. The flames that formed the longsword continued to rise in temperature, and after about one minute, they turned into a viscous liquid substance. They had seemingly turned into a live fire snake, swaying continuously while emitting astonishingly high temperatures.

Holding the Crimson Fire longsword, which had already reached a temperature thousands degrees high, Hoult slashed and activated

the Killing technique.

The flaming longsword turned into a fire snake and pounced forth furiously. Wherever it passed the air became twisted, releasing tremoring explosions as it fully encompassed the metal alloy pillar, as if the fire snake had swallowed it whole.

Consecutive booming sounds rang out, marking several consecutive explosions. The high temperature was maintained in the fire snake's stomach, and the metal pillar was melting and breaking at a speed that could be seen by the naked eye.

When Hoult drew back Crimson Fire, the entire surface of the metal pillar was now in a state akin to lava. One-third of the pillar had also been completely dissolved and was slowly recovering. However, compared to before, its recovery speed was more than a hundred times slower than before.

Hssss!

Looking at this scene, everyone present drew in a mouthful of cold air. Such damage prowess was even more terrifying than the one Shadow Death God Anderson had previously demonstrated.

It was hard to imagine what kind of person could stay alive in the Crimson Fire's stomach. If Hoult had sufficient time to unleash a few more attacks, he would probably be able to melt the whole metal pillar.

However, after unleashing this attack, the Crimson Fire also turned back to the normal flames it had first started out as. Clearly, to perform this move each time, a large amount of energy first had to be accumulated.

The requirement to accumulate such a tremendous amount of energy reduced the practicality of using this move in actual combat. However, it was very reasonable to be used in the Slashing the Heavenly Pillar stage. It was because what they were competing in was pure damage prowess.

And although Hoult's Fire Dragon Slash required energy accumulation, its damage prowess was astonishing.

Seeing this, Governor Devitt sighed and said, "The Crimson Fire... It's been awhile since I last saw it."

Hoult smiled and said, "Teacher also said that he misses you."

"Haha, that old man won't miss me at all. I'm the one who stole his girlfriend and made her my wife."

Hathaway frowned coldly and scolded in her heart, "This old man!"

Devitt then continued, "Although this in an ingenious move using accumulated energies, it is too dependent on the advantage of your weapon. I can only give you 55 points."

"I thank the lord for your guidance."

The white-haired Commissioner of Education, Luke, grinned, and with trembling lips he spoke out in a frail voice, "As expected of one under the Astral Ancestor. Just looking at the Crimson Fire and your cultivation level, this year's Regional Champion should be you. I give you 60 points."

When Devitt heard this, he frowned. Luke was obviously licking the Divine level expert's boots without any shame.

Capable looking Yaris, who was the youngest amongst them all, said, "It's really powerful. The final high temperature should be able to melt a Superior Divine Weapon. Just based on this alone, your future accomplishments will be no lower than your master's. I'll give you 58 points."

Armstrong was the last to speak. As he spoke, the scars on his face started twisting around like centipedes. "A magnificent attack with a powerful attack prowess. However, the movements required to accumulate energy are too much of a hindrance. It's not practical for combat use. I'll give 54 points."

With that, Hoult's attack got him 56.75 points, a whole 8.75 points more than Anderson.

Chapter 211 Slashing the Heavenly Pillar

(Part III)

Kirst's City Lord was also astonished by this attack. He then looked at Hoult's Crimson Fire with great envy.

“So this is a top-grade level 29 Superior Divine Weapon... It's really powerful, too powerful. Considering this longsword together with that attack which accumulates energy, just in terms of the damaging prowess alone, Hoult is undoubtedly the best among all the examinees.”

Most Knights in the training grounds who had seen this had all stepped back at least fifty meters away from the metal pillar, unable to take the high temperature.

Rota exhaled slowly, “He is strong, really strong. The prowess of this attack has probably exceeded the limits of a first transition Knight. This is not an attack that someone at Knight level can perform.”

Hamil also lamented, “Seems like Hoult will have the top position in the first stage. As expected of the third generation disciple of a Divine level expert. So this is the difference between us and someone from a powerful background.”

Anderson's face turned green, as if he had not expected Hoult to perform such a powerful attack. This attack was neither fast nor ingenious, and the practitioner even had to store up power to successfully unleash it.

It was an attack which pursued only damage prowess. In this area, there was nothing more others could say about it.

From there onward, other students taking their turns as the competition continued, including Rota, Hamil, and Manny. However, no one else could reach the level Hoult and Anderson had.

When it came to David's turn, he went up wearing a pair of golden-colored gloves. When he clenched his fist, streams of electricity started to encircle his fists.

Governor Devitt's brows twitched slightly, 'Thundergod Gloves?'

This set of gloves was clearly one with a bit of a reputation for itself, as it was the heirloom of Mongul City's City Lord. To think that this time around he had given them to David to use them in the Regional Selection!

This pair of gloves was a level 25 Superior Divine Weapon, and it encompassed one's fists with layers of electricity which could both numb and scorch one's enemies with the high temperatures. In a short instant it could release temperatures even as high as ten thousand degrees.

It was a pity that the temperature could not be sustained for long. Although the short outbursts of temperature were high, their damaging prowess was far from a match for the Crimson Fire longsword.

Many of the spectators had also recognized this equipment and had started mumbling between themselves.

David was wearing a proud smile as he took his stance to perform One Man Army. Controlling the air pressure and using the Thundergod Gloves, he wanted to create a high-temperature lightning attack to melt the metal pillar.

However, just before he punched out, a commotion broke out.

"Why is he not wearing his underwear?" Ferdinand shouted. "It isn't yellow today?"

Many people broke out in laughter. David tensed up for a moment and could not help but reach with one hand for his belt, while the other fist missed its aim. In that moment, the thunder punch's attack was greatly reduced, and it only made a five-inch dent on the metal pillar's surface.

Devitt shook his head, “You’re unable to calm down, 11 points.”

The other examiners were also a bit disappointed by David’s performance, and eventually gave him 10.5 points.

They were testing candidates who would eventually become Conferred Knights, and who had to be equipped with top-notch attributes in all areas, including their endurance toward external interferences. A person who had a slip-up from other peoples’ ridicule would not get the examiners to stop the spectators’ laughs, but rather, the examiners will just feel that the candidate was too weak psychologically, and was not cut out for great things.

In the battles between experts, each minute and second was of extreme importance. During a battle, how much turmoil would distractions bring them? To Devitt, a person who could not even focus was too disappointing.

Hearing this, David lowered his head, embarrassed. However, it also made him hate Fang Xingjian and Ferdinand even more as he swore to kill them. He glared at Ferdinand, only to receive a contemptuous look.

Finally, it was the last examinee’s turn. Fang Xingjian stepped forth. Being late, he was the last one to enter the competition, and had thus been given the last number.

He stepped forth, but no one felt that Fang Xingjian would be able to make greater damage than Hoult. The people in the stands were still dwelling on Hoult’s previous Fire Dragon Slash.

“It’s Fang Xingjian’s turn. He has a rare first transition job as well as Heaven’s Perception.”

“Those are not going to be of any use either. Neither Windstorm Sword Hero nor Heaven’s Perception are cut out for attacks. There’s no way for his damaging prowess to exceed Anderson’s and Hout’s.”

The aristocrats in the stands and the participants in the training

grounds were all people who knew their stuff. Previously, they had all gotten an understanding of the traits of Windstorm Sword Hero and Heaven's Perception, so they did not think that Fang Xingjian was able to get a high score.

Especially since Wei Leng, who also had Heaven's Perception, had only scored 12 points. How much higher could Fang Xingjian possibly score?

However, Fang Xingjian was unaffected by all these. He had to pass the Regional Selection and eventually go through the second transition to become a Conferred Knight. When that time came, he would become middle management level in the Empire, and there would be no one who would be able to easily harm him. Everyone would be busy trying to rope him in to join their side.

There were only five thousand Conferred Knights in the entire Empire, and slightly over two hundred in the Great Western Region. Across the eight regions, there were about two thousand Conferred Knights, and the remaining three thousand all belonged to the Empire's upper echelon.

What did this mean? It could be said that the entire Empire was governed by these approximately five thousand people. They either led cities, like Kirst's City Lord and Mongul's City Lord, managed Prefectural Academies like Headmaster Jackson, or lead armies.

Even if they were not leaders in a specific area, they tended to be important characters of major departments in political centers such as the Great Western City and the Imperial Capital.

Therefore, Fang Xingjian had less concerns now. What he needed to do was to display his talent to the best of his abilities, be more highly regarded, get more resources, build more relationships, all these in order to cultivate even faster.

Therefore, he was not planning to hold back too much. He opened his palm and the Effulgence Weapon took shape. The High

Frequency Effulgence Weapon, Silver Fox, appeared in his hands, akin to starry clouds and heavy fog. He then also drew out the level 20 Superior Divine Weapon, the Styx, which was attached at his waist.

The Silver Fox was placed above the Styx, and both the Effulgence Weapon and Divine Weapon gradually merged into one. It looked as if the Styx was covered in a layer of light and fog, and was consecutively trembling at a rate of one thousand five hundred times per second.

Holding the Styx in his hand, Fang Xingjian's other hand reached out to the metal pillar right in front of him, which had long recovered its original state. Fang Xingjian placed his palm on the cold metal pillar, activating his Heaven's Perception at full power, trying to perceive every tiny bit of information he could get.

Color, shape, weight, temperature, density... The shape of the metal pillar was slowly taking shape in Fang Xingjian's consciousness.

Various pieces of information, both internal and external, gradually revealed themselves to Fang Xingjian. At the same time, his Unparalleled Sword Intent was activated, frantically searching for the metal pillar's weakness.

Hints of light spots were appearing on the image in Fang Xingjian's mind, but the metal pillar's material was simply too strong. Fang Xingjian's sword arts cultivation was not sufficient to allow him to easily slash through it, and thus he could only see some blurred spots representing its possible weak points. There was a total of one hundred and eighty-eight of them.

And he was only allowed one move in the stage of Slashing the Heavenly Pillar.

This meant that he would need to slash out one hundred and eighty-eight times within a single move.

Chapter 212 Slashing the Heavenly Pillar

(Part IV)

The next moment, within ten meters of Fang Xingjian, formless sharp auras started accumulating. Streams of Ether Sword Ripples appeared behind him, making him look like a Thousand-hand Guan Yin, or like a peacock with its feathers spread out.

It was something ordinary people could not see. Only Fang Xingjian or the Conferred Knights who had Heaven's Perception could perceive it.

The four examiners clearly sensed the existence of the Ether Sword Ripples, and astonishment filled their eyes.

Especially when, in the next moment, the Ether Sword Ripples on the left side behind Fang Xingjian turned scorching hot, while those on the right side turned extremely cold. This was the new special effect he had gained after going through skill synthesis, allowing the Ether Sword Ripples to change their frequencies and either heat up or cool down.

Streams after streams... A total of four hundred streams of Ether Sword Ripples appeared behind Fang Xingjian, like many shapeless sharp swords. Two hundred of them were heated to over five hundred degrees, while the other two hundred had been cooled down to minus thirty degrees.

With Fang Xingjian's current stamina, he could only unleash five hundred and fifty streams of Ether Sword Ripples. He had now unleashed over 80% of his power in an instant.

Governor Devitt's eyes were filled with astonishment. 'What kind of attack is this? Did Windstorm Sword Heroes have such a skill? This skill is... too terrifying... It has far surpassed the level of people in the first transition.

'Hoult relies on the advantage of his Divine Weapon, but to think

that Fang Xingjian is relying on his own powers!’

Effulgence Weapon, Divine Weapon, Unparalleled Sword Intent, and then four hundred streams of Ether Sword Ripples. Fang Xingjian was slowly revealing his abilities, his Ether Sword Ripples. Each was 2.5 times his strength, and were ten times faster than supersonic speed.

Almost at the same time when Fang Xingjian was doing all these, Governor Devitt shook the air furiously with a shout, “Everyone, be careful! Those below Knight-level... No... Those below Conferred-Knight-level all retreat at least a hundred meters away!”

Seeing how everyone was still in a daze, Devitt had no choice but to bellow again, “Quick!”

The spectators from the first row started to retreat. Although the other examinees could not sense the Ether Sword Ripples, nor did they understand what was going on, they also retreated.

Halfway through, Fang Xingjian suddenly moved.

Boundaries Negation!

His Silver Fox Styx was like a lightning cutting across the sky at an extremely fast speed. In the liquid-like air, his clothes were trembling frantically, and his body seemed to have expanded. After a series of sparks blew from the friction with the air, the longsword in Fang Xingjian’s hand created one hundred and eighty-eight sword shadows in an instant.

With a low chi sound, as if a scorching metal rod had been pierced into a human body, the Silver Fox Styx in Fang Xingjian’s hand, accompanied by a layer of fog-like shine, pierced half a meter into the metal pillar.

No one could see when Fang Xingjian had attacked with his sword. They could only witness the final result. When they saw that the longsword had entered half a meter into the metal pillar, they were all astonished. Other than Hoult and Anderson, this was

the best result so far.

However, it seemed like this was the limit?

Everyone felt that although the damaging prowess was not bad, there did not seem to be a need for the Governor to shout the previous warning.

Everyone's thoughts were churning very quickly. But a thousandth second after they had started, Fang Xingjian's one hundred and eighty-eight swords tapped on the metal pillar and the four hundred streams of Ether Sword Ripples displayed their true prowess.

The one hundred and eighty-eight swords pierced into the metal pillar's weaknesses, after which Fang Xingjian followed through with one final sword attack to create a greatly resonant explosion from the inside of the pillar.

The four hundred streams of Ether Sword Ripples, enhanced by his level 5 mental cultivation method, were all at 2.5 times that of his strength. At that moment, it was as if Fang Xingjian had attacked with one thousand times' worth of his damaging prowess.

How terrifying was this? Basically, Fang Xingjian had first weakened the metal pillar with one hundred and eighty-eight swords, after which he made an implosion to create resonance within it, and then layered one thousand slashes with both cold and hot attributes on the metal pillar. The pillar had started to expand and contract, ending up damaged.

What a terrifying condensation of his force! What a terrifying impact of energy!

It was as if he had smashed through the atmosphere and broken through the earth.

The same moment Fang Xingjian's longsword pierced into the metal pillar, he drew it out and left, retreating fanatically.

Even he himself did not dare to face this explosive force.

In the next moment, the loud booms and the extremely fierce compressed force made it seem as if there were a few hundred explosions going off at the same time. More than ten blocks of buildings collapsed as smoke and dust soared, while visible air currents started dispersing in all directions.

All the Knights had been forced to unleash their Reduced Force Fields in order to fend off the explosive impact as they looked at the scene with eyes wide-open and mouth agape.

It was not until all the dust had cleared up, blown away by gusts of wind, that the metal pillar's location was revealed. Actually, the metal pillar was no longer there. Other than a crater in the ground which looked like the spot of a meteor's landing, there was nothing there. Or rather, there was nothing but small pieces of the pillar, all over the floor.

When he saw this scene, Anderson's jaw dropped. He felt that there was only one word to describe his current feeling now.

‘F*ck!’

Anderson was not the only one who had been stunned by Fang Xingjian's attack. Everyone else was as well.

This was also the first time after Fang Xingjian had learned the Ether Sword Ripples that he had ever demonstrated its amazing powers before other people.

And this force, when compared to that of experts in the first transition, was overwhelmingly powerful.

Kirst's City Lord blinked as he look at the ground filled with scraps of the shattered pillar, slowly exhaling. All he could think of was if he were to forcefully receive this blow, how severe would his injuries be?

Governor Devitt also had his eyes wide-open, slightly surprised by Fang Xingjian's performance.

If he were to receive that attack from the front, naturally, he

would be able to handle it. However, if it was a sneak attack, even he would suffer internal injuries. And this despite the fact that he was an expert at the pinnacle of second transition, at level 29.

Of course, all Conferred Knights had attained Heaven's Perception and could see everything within a ten meter radius. Thus, it was generally unlikely for them to be caught unaware by a sneak attack.

He smiled and shook his head. This Fang Xingjian had given him far too many surprises and he could not help but smile. The more he looked at Fang Xingjian, the more he took a liking to him.

'If we were to carefully nurture this Fang Xingjian, he'll have a high chance in clinching the title of National Champion in the National Selection, becoming a champion for three times in a row.

'Haha, a champion for three times in a row... There had only been one ever since the founding of the Empire.

'There's also Anderson, Hoult and Wei Leng... There's quite a lot of talents in this year's Regional Selection.'

Thinking this, Governor Devitt's smile became even more amiable as he looked at Fang Xingjian as if he were a treasure.

He calmly said, "To tell the truth, Fang Xingjian, you have astonished me yet again. Haha, you're able to surprise me each time we meet. But this time around, the surprise was by far the greatest!

"Regarding your attack, I can only say, 'perfect'. If I were to give a score, I can only give 100 points."

The other three examiners had also recovered from the shock as they looked at Devitt in surprise. However, after giving it some thought and glancing at the metal pillar which was like a puddle of mud, slowly regenerating, they all immediately felt that he was well deserving of this score.

The aged Commissioner of Education said, "Fang Xingjian, your

talent is unrivaled. Having such accomplishments at such a young age, in a few years' time, the Empire's top ten Divine level experts will become the top eleven. However, your attack was like a double-edged sword. It has a great backlash impact, and it is thus still flawed. I'll give you 95 points."

Yaris smiled as he looked at Fang Xingjian and said, "In the future, you'll definitely be a sword arts grandmaster of your generation. I think very highly of you. I'll give you 100 points as well." He then joked, "In the future, do take my son as your disciple."

Armstrong stayed silent for a moment before saying coldly, "In terms of your damaging prowess, you're the top amongst all these five hundred and twelve examinees. It's indisputable. It doesn't matter what score I give, so I'll just give 100 points.

"Your stage should be on the National Selection. I'll look forward to your future performance."

Therefore, Fang Xingjian received a score of 98.75 points, fully deserving of the first place.

Chapter 213 Rest

At first, both the people in the training grounds and those in the stands were all astonished by the earth-shattering impact caused by Fang Xingjian's attack. Each of them were considering how, had they been on the receiving end of that move, they probably would have died.

Following that, hearing the examiners' comments for Fang Xingjian, it was as if waves of explosions were continuously shaking them up.

Perfect! Would definitely become Divine level! Future grandmaster of sword arts! Looking forward to his performance in the National Selection!

They all sounded exaggerated, but only such praises without any hints of smooth talking could match up to Fang Xingjian's performance. Because such was the damaging prowess Fang Xingjian had instantaneously unleashed with more than a thousand swords.

Lilia waved her fist excitedly and said, "Teacher is really too cool!"

Kirst's City Lord sighed. Looking at the gleaming green eyes of the young aristocratic ladies around, he thought, 'Lili, with his, you'll have even more competitors now.' However, when he looked at Fang Xingjian, his gaze seemed to turn more and more into that of a mother-in-law who was looking at her future son-in-law. He felt more and more that Fang Xingjian was a good candidate.

Ferdinand exhaled and said, "This is really satisfying! To think that Xingjian still has this hidden up his sleeves. City Lord, if you were to be hit with this, would you be able to handle it?"

Kirst's Conferred Knight snorted disdainfully, replying, "Of

course I can. But its prowess is sufficient to deal with some of the freshly transitioned Conferred Knights.”

On the other end, Anderson was looking at Fang Xingjian in disbelief, shouting out crazily in his heart.

He could accept Hoult surpassing him, since Hoult had received the legacy of a Divine level expert, and since he also had a level 29 Superior Divine Weapon.

However, to think that Fang Xingjian suddenly jumped out and threw him far behind! Anderson, who was used to always being in the first place, felt emotionally unbalanced.

Ever since being old enough to know better, he had never once lost to anyone of his age. After he had transitioned into a Shadow Death God, he had not lost to any Knight. And for the past year he had been able to defeat any first transition opponent with a single move.

All of these had given him reasons to feel proud of himself. He had felt that no Knight would be able to face even a single attack from him. And even if there were any who could, they would already be considered as having earned the right to keep their lives.

However, to think that Fang Xingjian had won him overwhelmingly in terms of both damaging and explosive powers, the two areas he was the most proud of...

To Anderson, someone who had gotten used to the feeling of winning since young, and who was always the one to suppress others, this was too infuriating.

He only felt that everyone's praises for Fang Xingjian were mocking words targeting him. The four examiners' praises made him feel even worse.

‘Hmph, just you wait. It's not as if the one with the strongest damaging prowess is the best.’ Anderson snorted and thought to

himself, 'See how I'll deal with you during the arena battle.

'One-on-one fighting is what my Shadow Death God excels in.'

Hoult, on the other hand, showed an unfathomable smile as he looked at Fang Xingjian and thought to himself, 'To think that I've come across such an interesting character this time around.

'It's a pity, a pity that he rejected the Holy Orison's invitation. Otherwise, he would have also had a chance to join our ranks.'

Even Wei Leng, who always looked as if nothing else in the world mattered to him, was looking at the scene before him in astonishment.

Let alone Rota, Hamil, Ralph, Manny and the others.

David clenched his fists tightly. Each comment given by the examiners made him feel horrible. He looked at the two Knights behind him, who were wearing strange expressions, showing signs of faltering, and then said coldly, "I'll add another one thousand gold for each of you and send all of you safely to the Sand Country in the west. Moreover, I'm not asking the two of you to flout the rules, nor to kill anyone. What are you so scared about?

"And don't forget, your families are in our hands."

Hearing his words, the two Knights exchanged a glance, then nodded helplessly.

David looked at Fang Xingjian coldly and thought viciously, 'You can stay arrogant for now, but you not for long. I'll get you well and truly eliminated when tomorrow comes.'

He then turned to look at Kirst's City Lord and Lilia who were on the stands, more hatred growing in his heart, 'Just you guys wait, you'll regret this, all of you. No one can remain unscathed after offending me.'

With that, the first stage ended with Fang Xingjian in the first position, Hoult in second, and Anderson in third. Only those in the

top one hundred remained. They would stay in the Regional Academy for a day, and move on to the second stage tomorrow.

The remaining four hundred and twelve people were all eliminated, overcome by grief.

Some people dropped to their knees, falling on the floor with a thump. Others broke down in tears as they pleaded with the examiners.

There were also people who broke into laughter, taking a whole bag of money with the intention to flaunt it all through the night.

And people who quietly disappeared into the crowd.

Examinee number one walked up to his children in disappointment, touched their heads and said, "I'm sorry. To think that daddy couldn't even make it past the first stage. I'm really getting increasingly useless with age."

"That's not true, daddy." The young lady hugged the middle-aged man in tears and said, "In our eyes, you're the strongest!"

The young man said, "Father, don't worry. I'll participate next time around. I'll definitely make it past the Regional Selection."

The middle-aged man smiled and said, "Alright, alright, alright. Let's go back to the inn. Your mother must be getting anxious."

Four hundred and twelve people left dejectedly as the remaining one hundred people excitedly entered the building that the academy had prepared for them.

There was a total of three storeys in the building, with the accommodations on the second and third storeys. There was a total of fifty rooms, and two people would be sharing each room.

The first level was the bathroom and dining hall. Three meals would be provided each day.

Manny, Rota and the others all followed behind Fang Xingjian. Manny smiled and poked Fang Xingjian's chest, asking, "Dude,

how did you do that? Don't tell me that you've started skill syntheses when your Heaven's Perception is only at a 10% ether synchronization rate?"

Fang Xingjian had long prepared his reply for such questions and said, "I did try a bit, got lucky and succeeded in a few."

Hearing Fang Xingjian's words, Manny and the others were all stunned. If they were in his shoes, with a mere 10% success rate, they would find it impossible to risk using the skills they had been cultivating for many years to go through skill syntheses.

Manny stuck up his thumb at Fang Xingjian and replied, "You're good."

When they reached the dormitory's entrance, Manny said, "Let's go and get some food. This is the Regional Academy's dining hall. Each of their dishes is made from ferocious beasts."

Hearing about food, Fang Xingjian's eyes lit up. His interest was piqued and he nodded, saying, "Then we'll have to taste them carefully."

Rota looked at Fang Xingjian, feeling weird. She could not see him as one who would have a desire for delicacies. She had always seen Fang Xingjian as a cultivating rock. She felt that in his life, there was nothing else but cultivating and killing for him.

Chapter 214 Eating, Drinking and Discovery

The dining hall, that was prepared for the Knights participating in the Regional Selection. was naturally different from ordinary dining rooms or canteens catered for university students.

It was more like a hotel setting, with tables for four placed around. Once someone took a seat, a maid would come over to take their order.

Manny picked up the menu and was about to order when Fang Xingjian said imposingly, “Bring us two of each dish.”

When he sensed Manny’s awkward gaze, Fang Xingjian said, “We’re all Knights. So, why do we need to stand on ceremony?”

He was right. Knights depleted a tremendous amount of energy and the food they required far surpassed that of ordinary people. It was just like how when Fang Xingjian had been back at KIRST Academy; he would have ferocious beasts for every meal, and he would take five meals a day.

However, at the mention of the food in Miracle World, Fang Xingjian had always found it weird that, other than some heavenly and earthly treasures and ferocious beasts, many of the animals and plants were all very similar to those on Earth. For example, potato, vegetables, pineapple, black fungus, or pigs, cows, sheeps and horses... All these were basically the same as those on Earth.

As they were two different worlds, it was unlikely for them to be so similar. This was something Fang Xingjian had never managed to figure out.

After all, these were not things that Fang Xingjian was concerned about. The evolution of biological creatures was something that scientists should be studying, not him. Not long later, his attention was attracted by the delicacies served by the Regional Academy.

After performing that move earlier to unleash four hundred

streams of Ether Sword Ripples, much of his physical strength had been depleted and he was famished.

The first dish was roasted wild ferocious chicken. The chicken meat was so tender that it melted in one's mouth. Its crispy skin had the taste of various spices and the fragrance from being grilled over charcoal. Fang Xingjian finished it in almost a few bits, while Manny had also snatched away two drumsticks.

Not only was it delicious, but since the ingredient was a wild ferocious chicken, Fang Xingjian could feel the strong vital energy and blood that it contained, and they started to explode out in the form of warm currents toward his limbs from his stomach.

The next dish was a vegetable dish called Pineapple Salad. Potatoes were first steamed, mashed, then combined together with a sauce made from a combination of twelve medical herbs, before finally being shaped like a pineapple. Not only did it look good, but it tasted refreshing as well. The sauce had a taste similar to that of cream soup with a very rich taste.

The most nutritious part was naturally the sauce made from the twelve medicinal herbs. Each of the twelve was a heavenly and earthly treasure which had various strengthening effects on the body. After eating it, Fang Xingjian could almost feel that his reaction, flexibility, and stamina had all risen slightly. Of course, there was no change to his attributes; it was just a feeling.

Dishes and dishes of delicacies were served up endlessly, but they were wiped out by Fang Xingjian, Manny and Rota at an even greater speed. There were all first transition level 19 Knights and they could finish whatever food that was served within a few big bites. They could also actuate their organs easily to digest most of the food within an instant. Their stomachs were like large millstones and had digestive abilities that far surpassed that of ordinary people.

Especially after having having depleted so much physical

strength that day and because the dishes in the Regional Academy far surpassed anything they had eaten before in terms of their taste, nutritional value and presentation, their appetites were piqued greatly.

However, as they ate, Rota suddenly went into a daze and stopped eating as she stared at Fang Xingjian.

Seeing her behavior, Manny also looked at Fang Xingjian.

Fang Xingjian frowned and asked, "What's wrong?"

Rota's lips curled up and said, "It's nothing. It's just that after knowing you for so long, this is the first time I've seen you smile."

"Smile?" Fang Xingjian touched his lips unconsciously. He had suddenly showed some signs of a faint smile while he was eating.

Fang Xingjian took a few more bites. When Manny and Rota saw that he was suddenly in a daze, they could not help but ask, "What's the matter?"

"It's nothing." Fang Xingjian suddenly stood up and headed out. "I'm done. You guys can carry on."

The two of them looked at Fang Xingjian with a strange look, not understanding what had just happened.

However, Rota smiled slightly and thought to herself, 'This guy looks quite cute when he smiles. Why does he always have to appear like a dead man?'

Compared to the two of them, Fang Xingjian felt even more complicated in regards to his smile.

How long had it been since he last felt happiness and bliss? The purple flames had taken away his kinship, love and friendship, so he should not have any feelings for any other people. However...

'Humans have many emotions like those mentioned in the seven deadly sins, which are pride, envy, wrath, sloth, greed, gluttony and lust.

‘If my kinship, love and friendship have all been taken away from me, but pride, envy, wrath, sloth, greed, gluttony and lust still remain...

‘Then could it be that I can still feel gluttony?’

Fang Xingjian thought back carefully about the things that had happened in the past one and a half years. He had noticed increasingly that each time he ate something good, his feelings did turn for the better by a little bit. Moreover, it was true that he was placing more and more emphasis on his food.

At first, he thought that this was just a habit left behind from having great meals and delicacies every day. However, thinking about it now, he felt increasingly that there was more to it than that.

‘I’ve truly developed an increased liking to good food... Moreover, good food can let me feel a hint of... happiness?’

Fang Xingjian then thought, if he could still feel gluttony, then what about lust?

However, having stayed in Miracle World for one and a half years, he had not felt anything for any females.

‘That’s not right. I have no feelings in terms of love, but if it’s actual lust...’

Pure lust naturally did not take into consideration of one’s feelings. It was just a straightforward act.

Lilia’s and Rota’s images suddenly appeared in Fang Xingjian’s mind. He shook his head furiously and dismissed those distracting thoughts as he headed for his room. Then he started cultivating while seated on his bed.

Cultivating had long since become a part of his life.

A cloud of silver-colored fog exuding a faint white light was circulating around Fang Xingjian’s hands. With each tremor, Fang

Xingjian's cultivation in the Ether Divine Art would increase slightly.

Deep in the night in another room, Shadow Death God Anderson's hands were pressed down onto the ground as all surfaces, including the ground, walls and furnitures, were covered up by a layer of shadow. These shadows continued to jump around endlessly, looking as if they all breathed and had heartbeats of their own.

Geniuses were not created from mere talk. Since three years ago, Anderson no longer slept and cultivation had become his instinct.

In a corner of the room, a female Knight was looking at this terrifying scene with a gloomy face. She wanted to scream but did not dare to do so. This female Knight was Anderson's room mate.

As if finding the female Knight a bother, Anderson opened his eyes, glared at her and said. "Go sleep in the corridors. Don't be bothering me here."

The female Knight left quickly as though her life had been spared.

In another room, Hoult got up gradually from his bed, then casually took a white bedsheet to wrap his naked body.

Looking at the other two soft and tender bodies on the bed, he smiled slightly. He then walked toward the windows and looked to the moon.

"The weather tomorrow should be good."

The night passed by. Not many Knights were truly able to sleep on this night. Most of them were either doing their final cultivating efforts, nurturing their mental spirits, or were too excited and nervous.

However, the night still passed by eventually. Everyone welcome the second stage in the Regional Selection, 'Contention for the Top Tier'.

Chapter 215 Contention for the Top Tier (Part I)

One hundred examinees arrived before the humongous maze which ran about one kilometer both in length and width and had a height of three meters. Everyone who saw this maze for the first time felt like they were looking at a miracle.

This was clearly not something that could be accomplished by the architecture technology of this era. It must have been created by some powerful character with their own powers.

As expected, Governor Devitt said, “This maze is known as the Discombobulate Maze and was made by the Great Western Region Regional Academy’s very first Headmaster, the Divine level expert, Melancholic Monarch. It is an enclosed area he created with his own hands, and it has remained intact even after two hundred years have passed. We have now put in various powerful, ferocious beasts ranging from level 1 to level 21. Of course, there’s only one level 21 ferocious beast, but you must still be careful.”

Hearing the Governor’s words, everyone looked toward the tremendous maze in amazement, sighing over the powers of a Divine level expert. How strong had the Melancholic Monarch been back in the day?

Thereafter, under Governor Devitt’s commands, everyone looked in the direction of a stone tablet right next to the entrance. It was carved with the maze’s map, and there were one hundred red dots on it.

Governor Devitt said, “There’s a total of one hundred points in the maze. Each one of you will take one spot and will not be allowed to move beyond ten meters from the allocated spot.

“After you’ve all arrived at the designated spots, beast luring incense will be unleashed in all the spots. The sleeping ferocious

beasts will gradually wake up and start to attack you.

“Those who manage to stay on as part of the last fifty examinees will win the right to enter the third stage. However, you’re not allowed to take a passive approach. Those who are not able to kill any ferocious beasts within each ten minutes interval will be disqualified immediately.

“Examinees are not allowed to attack each other. Of course, if you have any other ways to cause trouble for other examinees and have them eliminated earlier, please feel free to use them.

“It’s because aside from testing your survival abilities, this is also a test of how you will compete and go against each other.”

Upon hearing about the beast luring incense, most of the Knights present appeared perplexed, not knowing what it was.

Only Knights who had participated in hunts, following ordinary soldiers in order to hunt down ferocious beasts in the mountains, on the plains and in the forests, would have heard of beast luring incense before.

This was something that had originated from the Sand Country, and it was said that just a single drop of it would lure in ferocious beasts which were within a three hundred meter radius. As Sand Country had scarce resources, they had developed this specifically for hunting. However, as the ingredients were too precious and the amount was too little, ordinary people did not know of its existence at all.

To begin with, beast luring incense was hard to come by, and to top it off, all the Knights present were all geniuses. What were geniuses? They were people who could focus on cultivating without a care for trifle issues. Their ferocious beasts had all been purchased. How could they possibly have followed soldiers and commoners to hunt their own ferocious beasts? That was all the more the reason why they would not have heard about beast luring incense.

Even if they had taken part in actual combat every year, they would have been mostly punitive expeditions going after bandits or riotous ferocious beasts, or taking part in wars like the one with Garcia. It was not possible for them to be spending so much time to go on hunts, since what was most important in hunting was not the battle but the tremendous time spent on waiting.

David broke out into a confident expression, clearly aware of what this thing was.

Governor Devitt continued speaking, “Now, all of you will be put through a body search. You’re forbidden to carry poison, beast luring incense, fuel, kerosene...”

Governor Devitt listed a bunch of items and finally said, “It is forbidden to bring in the abovementioned items. Although we say that you can compete and cause trouble for each other, using these items is of no relevance to your abilities and intellect. It’s just reliance on foreign items. You’re better off handing them up yourselves.”

Devitt pointed to an empty land and said, “Otherwise, if I were to find any later, you’ll be disqualified straightaway.”

Many people present revealed disappointed expressions. They had in fact brought along kerosene, poison and things like that in hopes of protecting themselves, fending off the monsters, or luring the ferocious beasts elsewhere. After all, using fire and poison was much faster and safer than attacking and trying to kill the ferocious beasts themselves.

However, using such means was not an indication of their intellect nor their abilities but just on their reliance on external objects. Thus, they were forbidden by Governor Devitt to use them.

There were people who had known about the existence of beast luring incense. They had wanted to put the incense in someone else’s spot to increase the level of the monsters attracted there and

thereby, reducing the pressure on themselves. These people also had disappointment reflected on their faces.

In a short period of five minutes, many people walked out, piling up the empty land with items. No one would hope to be lucky in the presence of a Conferred Knight's Heaven's Perception.

After the checks were over, Devitt pointed to the one hundred dots on the stone tablet and said, "We'll now let you choose your designated spots based on your rankings in the first stage. Fang Xingjian, you're first, so we'll start off with you."

Hearing that, Fang Xingjian walked up while contemplating his understanding of this stage.

In this stage, the most important thing was how long one could hold on for, but at the same time, they were not allowed to take a passive approach. It was because if they did not kill any ferocious beasts within every ten minutes, they would be disqualified.

However, they could not just kill blindly, since there were even ferocious beasts up to the level of 21. Although they would not be as strong as Conferred Knights, they had far surpassed the abilities of first transition Knights.

Therefore, in this stage, one needed to have strong combat abilities, but at the same time, one also needed to be in control over the competition's rhythm. They should not create too big an impact and attract the level 20 or level 21 ferocious beasts. Or maybe, they would require a strong concealing or defensive ability to fend off level 20 or even level 21 ferocious beasts.

At the same time, you would also need to guard against traps set up by others and the special abilities or tricks they might use against you.

Basically, this was test of combat ability, endurance, and intellect. However, this was only for ordinary people.

Fang Xingjian was naturally different from ordinary people.

What he needed to do in the Regional Selection was win over everyone with overwhelming power and talent. Thus, he would then naturally be awarded the title of Regional Champion and become the student that receives the full nurture of the Regional Academy. In a year's time, he would then become a second transition level 29 Conferred Knight and participate in the following year's National Selection.

Therefore, he did not choose the corners which would allow the him to defend himself easily. Instead, he pointed to the red dot in the center of the maze and said, "I'll take this spot."

Everyone were astonished. Devitt smiled and nodded, then said, "Haha, I'm looking forward to your performance even more now."

Anderson, on the other hand, let out a tsk and mumbled, "Snatched the place I wanted to take." Anderson felt that Fang Xingjian had once again snatched his limelight.

Hoult went next and he chose a corner spot carefully.

Then came Anderson's turn. He pointed at a spot next to Fang Xingjian and said, "I'll take this." After saying that, he twitched his elegant-looking nose and threw a glance at Fang Xingjian.

Wei Leng chose a corner position as well.

Just like that, everyone took their turns to choose their spots. Rota chose a northwest position while Manny was in the northeast.

David was also located in the northwest. The two Knights behind him, to everyone's surprise, chose the two spots right next to Fang Xingjian.

The more central the position was in the maze, the easier it was to be under attack from all directions. Therefore, other than Fang Xingjian and Anderson, no one else chose the positions in the center. They had all chosen the spots closer to the boundaries, or if those spots were all taken, they would all move inward slowly.

However, those two Knights had both chosen a central position without any hesitation.

David smiled coldly to himself as he looked at Fang Xingjian, ‘Fang Xingjian, just you wait. I have a great surprise waiting for you.’

After everyone had made their selection, Governor Devitt said calmly, “Then let’s go.”

In the next moment, Governor Devitt’s fist clenched tightly and a huge ice pillar rose from below everyone’s feet. The moisture in the air froze upwards continuously, transforming into an ice dragon which crossed the skies and moved everyone right above the maze.

Chapter 216 Contention for the Top Tier

(Part II)

As the ice dragon was moving across the skies, several Knights were looking nervously at the tremendous maze under their feet.

Governor Devitt's voice rang out, "Haha, there's no need to be nervous. Don't move recklessly, I'll send all of you to your designated spots. If you recklessly move about, don't blame me if you fall to your death."

Everyone instantly froze up, as if they were really scared that if they were to recklessly move about, the Governor might make a blunder.

In the next moment, with a slight movement of Governor Devitt's finger, the ice dragon disintegrated. Each of the examinees was supported by a piece of ice beneath their feet, and was sent toward their respective spot out of the one hundred in the maze.

The Knights who saw this scene were all once again astonished by the powers of a Conferred Knight. Regardless of whether it was the ice dragon which had cut across sky or the technique he had demonstrated when he was sending all one hundred Knights to their designated spots, both had displayed Governor Devitt's terrifying strength.

Fang Xingjian also landed softly in the central spot of the maze, together with the block of ice. He then discovered that, with a dot as the center, a blood-red colored circle was drawn around the ten-meter radius.

From now on, in the competition, he needed to persevere within this circle, all the way to the end.

Just then, another booming sound rang out. In the east of the maze, a stone platform rose up from the ground to a height of over a hundred meters, as if it were an elevator. It had now become an

elevated platform.

This was the work of the Deputy Governor Armstrong. All the spectators were located on the stone platform, looking down at the scene of the competition with great excitement.

Kirst's City Lord was together with Lilia, Ferdinand, Anthony and Robert. Kirst's City Lord said, "This stage tests the examinees' ability to handle attacks head-on, as well as their survival abilities. It's extremely advantageous for the Windstorm Sword Hero."

Lilia nodded as she nervously looked at the maze, just like the others. Suddenly, shouted loudly, saying, "Look! Why is Teacher right in the middle of the maze?"

Kirst's City Lord frowned, "Fang Xingjian was in first place in the previous stage. By right, he should have been the first person to choose his position. Does this mean that he has chosen this spot of his own accord?"

At the same time, the other spectators on the platform had also noticed that both Fang Xingjian and Anderson had chosen a post in the center of the maze, exclaiming loudly in their surprise. They had not expected for the two who had been ranked so highly in the previous stage to be taking such huge risks when there was a level 21 ferocious beast in the maze.

On a corner of the platform, Tresia Clan's Xiu Yi and Zhou Yong had both arrived too. Xiu Yi had once thought of using the Ring of Lightning to win over Fang Xingjian, but he had ended up defeating him. Fang Xingjian had even defeated all eight Knights in the Tresia Clan, also abducting Kaunitz.

Kaunitz's location was now unknown, and Tresia Clan had become like a wilting flower whose dazzling moment had passed, its reputation in Kirst taking a great plunge.

Zhou Yong was only there to observe, while Xiu Yi had been eliminated through the first stage. Looking at Fang Xingjian

positioned in the center of the maze, Xiu Yi's gaze was filled with hatred. Tresia Clan's reputation had plunged, and he was also affected. Many businesses of his family had been affected, and their profits were plunging. As a result, his cultivating resources had also been reduced. How could he not hate Fang Xingjian?

Zhou Yong asked, "Martial Brother Xiu Yi, what is the clan head's plan? Will he be coming?"

Xiu Yi coldly replied, "It's useless even if the clan head were to come. However, he has already contacted Lord Adri (Deputy Commander of the Imperial Guards, level 25 Conferred Knight, the younger brother of Tresia Clan's clan head). Lord Adri should be here very soon."

"Lord Adri will be coming here in person?"

Xiu Yi nodded and said, "With the hatred of having the bloodline cut off, how could he not? Previously, the Lord had sent people in search of Fang Xingjian. It was one thing when we were unable to find him. Now, to think that he dares to openly appear in Great Western City and even participate in the Regional Selection...

"When Lord Adri is here, he'll teach him a good lesson."

Zhou Yong's eyes lit up and said, "Look, Fang Xingjian chose a spot in the center."

Xiu Yi said, "Hmph, arrogant fool. This Fang Xingjian is getting more and more arrogant the grows stronger. It's fine like this tooo. In order to cause someone's downfall, it's important to let them go wild first. The more arrogant he becomes, the closer he'll be to failure."

Regardless of the spectators' chatter, with the one hundred examinees and the spectators in position, the four examiners, with Governor Devitt in the lead, headed to the north, south, east, and west of the maze respectively, observing from the air.

Governor Devitt spoke in a loud voice, "Then, I announce that

the competition starts now.”

The next moment, the small hole in the middle of each designated spot immediately started releasing a large amount of beast-luring incense. This beast-luring incense was colorless, scentless, and useless on humans, but to ferocious beasts, it was highly intoxicating, and the best stimulant.

Amidst the nervousness and excitement of the countless anticipating Knights, one minute later, the first beast’s roar rang out ferociously. Its terrifying roar was a cross between that of a lion and that of a tiger, filled with endless viciousness and coldness.

And after this roar rang out, many other started to follow, filling up the entire maze in an instant, as if the competitors were in a primitive forest filled with various ferocious beasts.

While levitating, Governor Devitt snapped his fingers, activating his Killing technique – Hundred Dragon Ice Incantation. One hundred ice dragons made from frozen water vapour appeared above the maze, swimming continuously, just like true dragons, ready to save the examinees who would either give up or would lose their ability to fight.

But just as the competition started, the two Knights who had been together with David and had chosen the positions right next to Fang Xingjian suddenly made their moves.

Almost concurrently, they did the same action – each took out a dagger to slit his wrist. Blood spurted from the wounds, and and they poured it into the small bottles they had prepared earlier.

They then attached each small bottle onto an arrow, knocked each arrow on a bow, and with two sharp sounds, the arrows cut across the sky toward Fang Xingjian’s spot, with the slightest curve.

Fang Xingjian frowned, not understanding what the two of them

were up to. They were not allowed to attack each other in this stage. Although he could only sense through the wind, he could feel that the two arrows were shooting in his direction in a parabolic curve. They had been shot at a very slow speed, and the aim was off, thus making them unable to reach Fang Xingjian. They could only land on the outer ring of his designated spot.

However, although these two arrows would not hurt him, to be safe, he still activated the Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash, shooting out two streams of sword Qis to shoot down the two arrows.

However, as the sword Qis hit them, the glass bottles shattered as well. The fresh blood within splashed out and landed next to Fang Xingjian's spot.

Fang Xingjian frowned. He had sensed the arrows through wind and sounds, but had been unable to sense that they also had glass bottles on them. This was the drawback of being blind.

This blood was very weird. After splashing on the ground, it immediately dried up and turned pitch-black, as if the essence within it had disappeared in an instant.

At the same time, the two Knights who had shot the arrows immediately raised their hands and shouted,

“I give up!”

“I give up!”

Chapter 217 Contention for the Top Tier

(Part III)

The same moment the two had shouted that they were going to give up, two ice dragons immediately descended and sent them out.

David laughed out loud. His plan had succeeded.

The first and third stage in the Regional Selection were mainly independent trials, thus making it almost impossible for examinees to interfere with each other.

The battle arena in fourth stage relied solely on one's abilities, unless he could find a chance to poison him. However, it was much too difficult to poison someone in a Regional Academy.

Therefore, his final and only chance was during the second stage, 'Contention for the Top Tier'. It was only in this stage that he could tap on the strength of the ferocious beasts. He had researched many methods, but had eventually decided on the beast-luring incense.

However, it was probably forbidden for them to bring the incense as it was, since, if such things could be used, it meant that so could all sorts of other items, including acid, poison, or kerosene. The purpose of the examination would have been lost, and this was something that the examiners would definitely not allow to happen.

Therefore, he had almost given up on using the beast-luring incense when he thought of something.

Other than growing and leveling up naturally, another way that ferocious beasts could level up was to devour various heavenly and earthly treasures. Countless ferocious beasts had turned berserk after having accidentally taken a large amount of heavenly and earthly treasures.

Many ferocious beasts had also, after devouring heavenly and earthly treasures, evolved into another type of ferocious beast.

Therefore, the method that David had chosen was to bring in heavenly and earthly treasures through the human body. He spent a total of seven days and up to ten thousand gold to feed these two Knights an endless supply of them. He had also forbid them from doing any kind of exercise or cultivation, in order to prevent them from assimilating the medicinal properties.

Through this method, he finally managed to get their blood filled with the medicinal properties of a tremendous amount of heavenly and earthly treasures, which meant that their blood now contained an essence which would attract countless ferocious beasts.

The essence of these medicinal herbs, mixed together with beast-luring incense, held a fatal attraction to any ferocious beast.

‘A blind man is still but a blind man,’ David coldly thought to himself, ‘no matter how sharp your hearing is, or if you’ve attained Heaven’s Perception.

‘No matter how hard to try to hid it, you won’t be able to hide the fact that you’re blind. You won’t be able to see the world beyond the ten-meter radius around you, so you won’t be able to notice the bottles of blood attached to the arrows.

‘Your biggest flaw is the fact that you’re blind. It’s no use no matter how much you try to hide it.’

In that instant, more and more ferocious beasts started going crazy. Their eyes turned bloodshot, fixed in Fang Xingjian’s direction. In the next moment, they all swarmed toward Fang Xingjian like wild waves.

Governor Devitt’s brows twitched, but in the next moment, he smiled.

Yaris, who was a distance away, modeled the air to send his voice to Devitt, asking, “We’re letting them go?”

Devitt replied, “This does not count as cheating. It can be considered... resourcefulness.”

Armstrong, whose face was filled with scars, also said, “One must use the brain in battle. There’s enough people who only know how to tackle with brute force. We can’t have only these kind of people in the ranks of the Conferred Knights, right?”

Devitt nodded, “If he had merely used beast-luring incense, then he would simply be relying on external objects. But what he has done is worthy to be called scheming. You guys must be more careful when differentiating between the two.

“Moreover...” Devitt smiled, “do you think that the competition has ended with just this? There’s a total of one hundred Knights here. How many of them are fools? Each one of the one hundred Knights have their own ways of thinking, their methods of doing things, and varying levels of cultivation. How could the result be clear with all these factors?

“Scheming is merely used as support. In the end, they still need to rely on their own abilities.”

While they were talking, the waves of maniacal ferocious beasts were already swarming toward Fang Xingjian.

Many Knights who were already prepared to fight now saw, to their surprise, that the beasts had chosen not to fight against them, but were heading for the center of the maze.

Holding onto a silvery white sword, Hamil sent a level 12 huge wolf flying with a slash. Just as he was about to give chase, he noticed that the wolf, after tumbling once, just wanted to dash past him.

His gaze flickered and he dodged the huge wolf. He then noticed that all the ferocious beasts which had been charging toward him were now bypassing him. In the beginning he took the chance to kill a few, but then something occurred and he stopped altogether.

‘What happened?’

‘Well, since I can save my energy, then there’s no need for me to waste my strength. First, I’ll wait and see if there’s any chances.’

...

On another side, Rota activated her Effulgence Weapon. Combined with her silver spear, it pierced through spatial gaps, thrusting into the head of a ferocious wild boar from over a hundred meters away. She then flicked her spear a couple more times and sent a ferocious tiger into the air.

Looking at the ferocious beasts which were all trying to pass by her and ignoring her, she had no intention to let them off.

‘Something has obviously gone wrong with the ferocious beasts. To think that so few of them are actively trying to attack me now...

‘But I should take this opportunity to kill more of them.’

Rota’s considerations and her understanding of the information given by Governor Devitt kept flashing in her mind.

‘Hmph, when ordinary people participate in the Regional Selection, they only think about increasing their cultivation level and about how they can pass the stages.

‘But I know that the most important factor in the Regional Selection is the Governor, who is the head examiner.’

In the Empire’s eight regions, there was a total of eight Governors, each of them placed in charge of the Regional Selection in their respective regions. And other than the Pantheon Monument Observation and the arena battles, the first two stages were decided by the respective Governors.

The stages and the set targets represented each Governor’s preferences.

‘Governors are humans too, and obviously have their own preferences. Some of them prefer head-on battles, some of them

prefer the use of intellect and scheming, some of them prefer launching a killing attack after hiding in the shadows, some of them prefer righteousness, some of them prefer sneakiness...

‘With different preferences, each of the Governors would, of course, have different ratings of the examinees in the first two stages.’

Rota understood well that if she wished to gain an advantage in the first two stages, she had to understand Governor Devitt’s character and preferences. She needed to figure out the main examiner’s intentions.

Rota had obviously tried to do that, and she knew that he hated those who did not put in effort during battles, but liked those Knights who took the lead and attacked valiantly.

This was what trying to fathom the thoughts of those in the higher level meant.

Somewhere else, it was Manny’s first time displaying his true strength before others. Without using any weapons or defensive equipment, he was attacking with his bare hands. Each time he attacked, his palms sent out hints of gravitational Waves, and each ferocious beast he targeted was knocked down to the ground, with either their organs damaged or their bones smashed.

Basically, he had paralyzed a large number of ferocious beasts, keeping them next to him.

Manny thought to himself, ‘I wonder how many people have realized that there’s a limit to the number of ferocious beasts. As the number of ferocious beasts we have killed increases, as the scent from the beast-luring incense turns increasingly faint, the number of ferocious beasts around us will reduce as well. When that time comes, those who can push through till the end will be those who will be able to continue in the rhythm of killing at least one ferocious beast every ten minutes.’

Chapter 218 Contention for the Top Tier

(Part IV)

Hoult, as the Astral Ancestor's grand disciple, appeared very much at ease. Since he had the best skills among all one hundred Knights, the space he had chosen was also bigger.

The level 29 Superior Divine Weapon 'Crimson Fire' in his hand had transformed into a huge dragon made of high-temperature flames which were hundreds of meters long, and which had encompassed the surfaces around him.

Any ferocious beasts which came within a thirty meter radius of him turned into balls of fire, crying out in agony as they rolled on the ground. This was the power of a level 29 Superior Divine Weapon. It was almost as if he had the help of a Conferred Knight.

He could even see through the huge flame dragon's eyes, witnessing first-hand what was happening far away.

With this Crimson Fire Divine Weapon alone, Hoult could exercise control over it to allow it to move around through the entire maze, and could kill any of the ferocious beasts. He could even create unimaginable obstacles for the other examinees.

Moreover, Hoult had not even used his strongest Killing technique.

However, he did not do so. He merely stroked the head of the Crimson Fire, his lips curled upward as he smiled, and said to himself, 'This is how the Regional Selection should be, with people competing both physically and intellectually. How boring would it be if one were to clear everything in a single sweep?'

...

There were people who were handling the competition with ease and who could make it till the end even if they were to stand there without moving. However, there were also people who were going

crazy while handling the waves of attacks from the beasts.

“F**k!”

Bellowing, Shadow Death God Anderson swung his Shadow Tooth about, creating streams of black-colored afterimages, slashing down ferocious beasts one after another. His speed was extremely fast and he was very accurate. His weapon, the Shadow Tooth, also had the ability to transform energy into a spinning force. With just a light touch, immediately, any ferocious beast's skin and flesh would be badly torn, bloody wounds appearing all over their bodies.

Although he could kill tens of ferocious beasts with great ease just using his Shadow Tooth and basic techniques, Anderson did seem to be relaxed in the least. It was because he could see densely packed ferocious beasts from afar, jamming up the entire maze's passageways as they came over like strong gushing waves.

There were even various ferocious beasts which had climbed up onto the walls of the maze.

Level 12 huge wolf, level 15 violent big bear, level 19 clouded leopard... Densely-packed ferocious beasts were bellowing maniacally, charging ahead non-stop with glaring blood-shot eyes. What made Anderson broke out in cold sweat was that, behind the waves of monsters, there was a monster that looked like the combination of a lion and tiger, encompassed by electricity. It was slowly heading toward him. It was five meters in height and ten meters in length, and its head had already exceeded the height of the maze.

It was a level 20 ferocious beast – Thunderous Roar.

“F*ck!

“What on earth is going on?!”

“Why are all the ferocious beasts swarming in my direction?!”

Anderson obviously did not know that, because his spot was the

closest to Fang Xingjian's, the pressure he was under was the greatest, following Fang Xingjian.

And since the Shadow Death God did not excel in combat against a group, he had to exert even more strength than usual when dealing with all these ferocious beasts.

The ice dragons in the air dashed toward the surface, one after another, able to, with just a fling of their bodies, turn a hundred or so ferocious beasts into meat sauce. They were retrieving a few examinees near Fang Xingjian.

In fact, other than Fang Xingjian and Anderson, all the other examinees who had been located near to the center of the maze had either lost their combat abilities, or had simply given up.

They were among the lower-ranked in the first stage to begin with, and naturally, it was impossible for them to fend off these waves of ferocious beasts.

On the platform, Lilia gritted her teeth and said, "This damned David, to think that he would use such despicable means! I'm going to cut off his balls and stuff them into his mouth!"

Cold sweat started dripping down the back of Kirst's City Lord's head. Ferdinand and the others also unconsciously took a step back, mumbling to themselves, 'Without Fang Xingjian around, this Lilia has once again become the violent girl she used to be. No... She's even more violent now.'

However, Ferdinand was starting to worry. He looked in the direction of the maze and saw that Fang Xingjian was holding onto Styx, and with a few casual swings, he kept sending hundreds of sword Qis in all directions, keeping almost all the ferocious beasts ten meters away from him.

If any of the ferocious beasts who were a bit stronger managed to get within ten meters from him, streams of formless slashes instantaneously cut them into pieces.

However, even so, everyone could tell that the spots where the beasts were getting killed slowly got nearer and nearer to Fang Xingjian. The area of a ten-meter radius around Fang Xingjian was also being piled up into small mountains of flesh as the tremendous corpses were piling up.

In the blink of an eye, the beasts' corpses rose a meter in height. If this went on, even if Fang Xingjian could persist, he would also be drowned by the corpses.

Moreover, everyone knew that Fang Xingjian's stamina was not limitless, nor could he casually perform that many formless slashes.

And what was worse was that a few hundreds meters away, four level 20 ferocious beasts were following behind the other beasts, observing Fang Xingjian as they drew closer and closer.

"Four level 20 ferocious beasts." Looking at this scene, even Ferdinand, who was extremely confident in Fang Xingjian, could not help but worry. "Four level 20 ferocious beasts... Even a level 20 Conferred Knight would probably need to spend quite a lot of effort to deal with them. Xingjian should be able to deal with one, but as for the other three...

"The most troublesome ones are the ferocious beasts which are level 20 and above, those which actually have some intellect, and are unlike ordinary ferocious beasts which only know how to charge and bite recklessly."

Just then, the crowd gasped again. A black-colored silhouette charged up into the air. Three ice dragons started to close in on it, and the black shadow collided against the them. With a loud Boom! as if a thunder had just rung out of nowhere, the three dragons were sent flying away, tumbling, only managing to stop once they were tens of meters away.

That black shadow had also landed onto the ground like a meteor, smashing onto the surface of the maze with a stifled boom.

If not because the maze had been made by the Divine level expert, the Melancholic Monarch, thus being indestructible, this attack would probably have resulted in an earthquake, and it probably would have made a large crater on the ground.

That black shadow touched its head, and in the next moment, fury flashed in its eyes as it leaped up the walls of the maze, banging on its chest furiously while facing the sky, bellowing furiously.

From its mouth, it released waves that were visible to the naked eye. Even from far away, the spectators on the platform felt discomfort in their eardrums.

It went to show what a great lung capacity that black shadow had, to exhale with such power!

And it was then when everyone recognized what it was. It was a monster fully covered in black-colored fur, and its appearance was very much like that of a gorilla.

The monster was three meters tall, each of its legs as thick and strong as steel pillars. One of the biggest difference between the monster and a regular gorilla was the fact that there was a circle of flames around its neck, like a scarf. Another difference was that it had a pair of extremely large and thick paws, covered with layers of crystallized materials.

“That’s the Colossal Armed Ape! A level 21 ferocious beast! Is that the only level 21 ferocious beast in the maze?”

“It’s so strong! To think that it can go against three of the Governor’s ice dragons and still survive!”

“It must have wanted to escape earlier, but was stopped by the Governor.”

Just then, the Colossal Armed Ape stopped its bellows, as if it knew that there was no way it could escape. Extreme fury flashed in its eyes as it turned toward Fang Xingjian.

With a deep sniff, it raged with a deafening bellow at the skies, then charged ahead furiously.

“Look! Its dashing toward Fang Xingjian!”

Tresia Clan’s Xiu Yi could not contain his smile. It was as if he was already witnessing Fang Xingjian being torn up by the Colossal Armed Ape in his head.

Chapter 219 Contention for the Top Tier

(Part V)

However, in the next moment, Xiu Yi shook his head and thought to himself, 'Fang Xingjian is not an idiot. If he really can't handle it, he'll definitely give up.'

'But that's good too. If he were to fail the Regional Selection, he won't be able to go through the second transition and become a Conferred Knight. When that happens, it'll be easier for Lord Adri to deal with Fang Xingjian when he comes.'

Lilia, Kirst's City Lord, Ferdinand and the others were all wearing astonished expressions when they saw this scene.

Most of the people in the spectator stands did not think that Fang Xingjian would turn out well either.

"One level 21 and four level 20 ferocious beasts... Fang Xingjian is done for."

"But if he were to use that move from yesterday, shouldn't he have a chance to kill the Colossal Armed Ape?"

"So what if he can kill it? Did you guys see how tired Fang Xingjian was after using that move yesterday? How would he be able to deal with the remaining four level 20 ferocious beasts with his remaining physical strength?"

The Colossal Armed Ape was truly too powerful. With just a punch, it could cause more than ten ferocious beasts to explode at a distance. With a casual dash, it would be able to leave the passageway, which spanned over a hundred meters in length, without a single trace of corpses or bones. All the ferocious beasts it passed by would simply be smashed into paste.

It ran furiously all the way. There was not a single ferocious beast which could delay the Colossal Armed Ape by even a single second.

Its body was as sturdy as an Empire's Divine Weapon. It had a terrifying strength of over 200 points, and its hands were covered with layers of crystallized material, which meant they had a toughness comparable to an armor at the level of the Inferior Divine Weapon.

This was a level 21 ferocious beast. They might not have the unfathomable and powerful Killing techniques Conferred Knights had, but they had the most terrifying and most violent physical attributes and tenaciousness.

Looking at how the Colossal Armed Ape knocked away the waves of beasts before it as it headed toward Fang Xingjian much like a tank charging recklessly, Kirst's City Lord, Lilia and Ferdinand all had their countenances turn grim.

Additionally, as the spectators on the platform saw the Colossal Armed Ape's performance on the way, they thought even worse of Fang Xingjian's ending.

In that moment, the Colossal Armed Ape went up to the four level 20 ferocious beasts. One of them had three heads: a lion's; a tiger's; and a wolf's. It also had claws like that of a lizard. It was a terrifying monster which was over six meters tall; this was the level 20 ferocious beast, Lion Tiger Beast.

However, such a massive creature, when faced with the Colossal Armed Ape, actually retreated while shivering. The Colossal Armed Ape did not let it go and instead, charged right up to it with its palm spread out, reaching out to grab the Lion Tiger Beast's tail.

Faced with such an attack, although the Lion Tiger Beast was terrified, there was no way that it would stay there and await death's arrival. With a furious bellow, all three of its head opened their big mouths, shooting out fire, cold wind and acid respectively.

The Colossal Armed Ape merely let out a huge bellow and let the

flames and cold wind brush across its body as if it had merely taken a shower. The acid dripped on its body but did not leave a single wound either.

Instead, the Colossal Armed Ape grabbed the Lion Tiger Beast's body with a fierce tug. As its arms swelled up, it tossed the over fifty ton Lion Tiger Beast into the air, throwing it away from out as if it was rubbish.

A huge boom rang out. After being tossed violently, the Lion Tiger Beast was slapped down onto the ground like a flat pancake. A series of explosions burst from its body as its three heads wailed, spitting out large mouthfuls of blood.

Its tail had also been torn into two pieces, unable to withstand the Colossal Armed Ape's tremendous strength.

Just one move alone and a level 20 ferocious beast was settled. After the Colossal Armed Ape had injured the Lion Tiger Beast heavily, it let out an excited cry and tossed away the broken tail in its hand as it pounced onto the Lion Tiger Beast.

Boom, boom, boom, boom! It landed punch after punch on the Lion Tiger Beast. Its fists were like two piledrivers, smashing onto the Lion Tiger Beast's body in a crazed manner. Under such a tremendous force, it was as though there was a magnitude 5 earthquake within a hundred meter radius. If it were not for the fact that the maze was sturdy enough amidst the crazy tremors, a large part of it would have collapsed.

After smashing up the Lion Tiger Beast's body into a paste, the Colossal Armed Ape bellowed excitedly. Covered in meat sauce and blood, it banged on its chest continuously with its fists.

In the next moment, it charged toward Fang Xingjian with a light leap.

On Fang Xingjian's side, the ground between ten to twenty meters away from him was already covered in pools of blood, with

the corpses piling up to three meter high. The many beasts all continued to step on the corpses and pounce toward Fang Xingjian.

Then when the new pile of corpses had piled up high enough, the monsters behind would be able to pounce toward Fang Xingjian from a closer distance.

These beasts were using their lives to create piles of corpses as they inched toward Fang Xingjian bit by bit.

At the same time, the Colossal Armed Ape charged in recklessly at an increasing speed. In the blink of an eye, it had surpassed the speed of sound, but it continued to accelerate, charging over as if it was a missile.

Fang Xingjian changed his will and ten streams of Ether Sword Ripples, with 2.5 times that of his strength and ten times that of supersonic speed, slashed out in all directions, turning all the surrounding corpses into dust. The effect of the high temperature had even set most of the corpses alight in that instant, gradually turning them into a pile of ashes.

As he cleared up the surrounding corpses, Fang Xingjian then continued to swing the Styx in his hand slowly. The casual movement was in fact extremely fast. Any ferocious beast which appeared within a ten-meter radius would all be slashed and killed instantaneously without any exceptions.

This area within the ten-meter radius was where his Heaven's Perception was active. To him, every subtle detail was extremely clear. With such a powerful sensing ability and his amazing speed, Fang Xingjian allowed nothing to surpass this line of defense.

However, on the other end, the Colossal Armed Ape's speed had accelerated to reach three times that of supersonic speed. It had covered a lot of ground within 0.3 seconds, and it only took a short instant for it to appear before Fang Xingjian.

When it transcended the speed of sound, all the spectators

gasped.

They all became conscious of a problem—Fang Xingjian was blind. If the Colossal Armed Ape transcended the speed of sound, it would be able to dash within Fang Xingjian's ten-meter radius before he would be able to discover it.

This meant that Fang Xingjian would only be able to notice the Colossal Armed Ape when it entered his ten-meter radius.

It was a ferocious beast with a height of three meters and could send something which weighed tens of tons flying with just a casual slap. It also had a body which was impenetrable by blades and spears, as though it was an Empire's Divine Weapon. How dangerous and terrifying would it be to have such a creature enter within his ten-meter radius at a speed that transcended sound?

Moreover, how difficult would it be for him to react within these mere ten meters, then push back and kill the Colossal Armed Ape? Would Fang Xingjian really be able to do it?

In the 0.3 of a second in which the Colossal Armed Ape had surpassed the speed of sound, the entire audience tensed up. However, the time was too short and only a brief change appeared in their expressions. They had not had the time to say a single word before the Colossal Armed Ape was already just about to enter Fang Xingjian's ten-meter radius.

Lilia's gaze was filled with worry while Kirst's City Lord's gaze was filled with solemnity, and Ferdinand appeared to be slightly lacking in confidence.

Elation started to fill up the gaze of Tresia Clan's Xiu Yi.

Even Governor Devitt, who was in the air, was fully prepared to save Fang Xingjian.

However, in the next moment when the Colossal Armed Ape had reached four times that of supersonic speed and was about to enter Fang Xingjian's ten-meter radius, at a speed which would allow it

to tear up a Knight within 0.1 seconds, Fang Xingjian showed everyone just what true speed was.

Chapter 220 Contention for the Top Tier

(Part VI)

How fast could a human be?

The public buses modern people took had a speed of about ten meters per second.

In a Ferrari, the highest speed that could be reached was 101 meters per second.

A passenger plane could maintain a speed of 277 meters per second.

Additionally, the world's fastest combat aircraft could reach about 935 meters per second. They could arrive at any place on Earth within four hours.

What else could travel faster?

Fang Xingjian's highest speed at ten times that of supersonic was about 3400 meters per second.

When the Colossal Armed Ape entered Fang Xingjian's ten-meter radius, Fang Xingjian's Heaven's Perception transmitted this information into his brain at the first instance.

About seven one-thousandths of a second later, the Colossal Armed Ape's fist would land on Fang Xingjian's head.

Therefore in the first one-thousandth of a second, Fang Xingjian received this news and reacted accordingly.

In the second one-thousandth of a second, Fang Xingjian activated Boundaries Negation as he "watched" the Colossal Armed Ape inch closer and closer toward him.

He could even "see" the strips of flesh on the Colossal Armed Ape. Fang Xingjian could also "see" the lumps of plasma, as well as 122 spots of light flashing on its body.

Those were the 122 weak points on its body. Fang Xingjian could sense that as long as he pierced the Styx into them, he would be able to cut it up into pieces.

His level 1 Unparalleled Sword Intent could even slice through the Empire's Divine Weapon directly, let alone the muscles and bones of the Colossal Armed Ape which was comparable to an Empire's Divine Weapon.

Therefore, in the following two one-thousandths of a second, Fang Xingjian's Silver Fox Styx was gradually covered with a layer of silvery fog. He had activated his High Frequency Effulgence Weapon, Silver Fox.

Then in the next one-thousandth of a second, Fang Xingjian's arm started to move with great trouble. The Styx sliced through the atmosphere, creating a series of afterimages as it tapped on the spots of light one by one.

The 122 swords appeared and then disappeared in a single one-thousandth of a second. The series of flashing sword sparks were reflected in the gazes of Kirst's City Lord, Lilia, and Ferdinand.

Fang Xingjian then took one small step forward and dodged the Colossal Armed Ape.

The sound explosions, air currents, sparks and sword lights caused one's vision to suddenly be in a mess.

Ordinary audiences could only see the a flash of light. To them, Fang Xingjian was still standing in the same spot, while the Colossal Armed Ape had passed by him and smashed strongly into the ground.

Roar!

With a desperate howl of fury, more than one hundred blood arrows shot out from all over from his body. Accompanied with this desperate howl, the Colossal Armed Ape split up into pieces, turning in a pile of minced meat.

Under everyone's astonished gazes, a small foot, the size of half of one of the Colossal Armed Ape's eyeballs, stepped onto the Colossal Armed Ape's head which had flown off.

Fang Xingjian looked curiously at the Colossal Armed Ape's wide-open eyes and its mouth which continued to remain in the state of when it had been letting out its last roar.

Suddenly, he lifted up his hand and caused sword light to sweep by, cutting open the Colossal Armed Ape's parietal bones.

He suddenly felt like tasting the ape's brain. It was like how he had suddenly realized that delicacies could bring him a little feeling of happiness. Such happy feelings, to Fang Xingjian who had not felt much happiness for the past one and a half years, were like a refreshing spring of water in a desert.

It made him want to try various delicacies.

Therefore, just like how he used to kill when he felt like it, with his current urge to eat the ape's brain, Fang Xingjian just cut up the Colossal Armed Ape's parietal bones and poked one finger into its head.

It felt a little bit like beancurd.

Fang Xingjian mixed it up a little bit and then licked his finger.

'This taste... is really intriguing...'

Just as Fang Xingjian killed the Colossal Armed Ape in a single move, the surrounding ferocious beasts had all stopped in their tracks. When they saw Fang Xingjian start to eat the ape's brain, some ferocious beasts started to retreat slowly.

The remaining three level 20 ferocious beasts watched as Fang Xingjian licked the ape's brain, then with a point of his finger, he roasted the ape's brain with the high temperature from the Ether Sword Ripples. They all turned to escape in all directions.

All the ferocious beasts started to retreat.

However, with one hand roasting the ape's brain, Fang Xingjian's free hand tapped lightly and released over ten streams of sword Qis, slashing off the hind feet of over ten ferocious beasts and preventing them from escaping.

Naturally, he would not make the mistake of not being able to kill any ferocious beast in each ten minute interval.

When Governor Devitt saw Fang Xingjian start to roast the ape's brain, his stomach suddenly did not feel so good.

It was worse for the audience on the platform. It could not be said for the whole the Miracle World, but at least, in the Empire, no one ate animal brains. Especially when the Colossal Armed Ape looked so similar to humans, when Fang Xingjian was eating the ape's brain, it was as if they were looking at someone eating a human brain.

Countless aristocrats and students all turned pale from fright and started puking.

Ferdinand's face also turned pale as he touched his head unconsciously and said, "Hey, was Fang Xingjian's taste always so intense?"

Kirst's City Lord also frowned slightly. Eating brains was too disgusting an act. Moreover, he had even done it in the midst of a battle and had even scared off the other ferocious beasts with this act.

However, Lilia merely stared in Fang Xingjian's direction and a trickle of transparent liquid flowed down from the corner of her lips. She suddenly asked, "Are brains tasty?"

Kirst's City Lord's countenance turned grim as he quickly said, "That's something savages do. Lili, don't try it."

Even though this was a disgusting act, such disgusting acts were all built on absolute power. He had killed a level 21 ferocious beast with a single slash and then cut up its parietal bones with another

so that he could eat the ape's brain.

To everyone else, Fang Xingjian was now not only strong but also terrifying.

The face of Tresia's Xiu Yi also turned pale as he felt both disgust and terror. Next to him, Zhou Yong trembled, "Elder Martial Brother, they have been unable to locate Kaunitz's corpse all this time. We've been hoping that there's a tiniest bit of hope that he has not died, but seeing how things are, could it be... could it be...

"Shut up!" Xiu Yi immediately snapped at Zhou Yong, then said, "Don't talk about the impossible." However, one could tell from the sweat on the back of Xiu Yi's head that he was truly afraid.

In this moment, after being shocked by Fang Xingjian, Xiu Yi had a feeling that he would be better off not be going against Fang Xingjian in the future. Otherwise, he may be...

With the ferocious beasts surrounding Fang Xingjian dispersed, the battle in the maze was restarted.

However, during the previous period, when all the ferocious beasts had been concentrated around Fang Xingjian, he had actually killed over two thirds of all the beasts in the maze. This left many people closer to the borders with no beasts to kill.

Additionally, this also resulted in many people being disqualified in the following ten minutes.

Rota, who had persisted in killing, Manny, who had kept aside crippled ferocious beasts, Hoult, who could control the movement of the Crimson Fire freely, as well as Anderson, who had spent quite a lot of effort before killing a level 20 ferocious beast—all of them were not disqualified.

However, there were more people like Hamil who had dodged the waves of ferocious beasts and thus ended up with none to kill. These people could only end up being disqualified.

Of course, as the person who had planned all these, David clearly

knew that all the ferocious beasts would leave at a very fast rate. Therefore, he had left a few level 4 and 5 ferocious beasts close to him so that he could kill them in turns.

With this, as the number of ferocious beasts continued to decline, more and more people got disqualified for not being able to kill any ferocious beasts after ten minutes.

Of course, there were also over ten unlucky chaps who had simply given up because they came across the remaining three level 20 ferocious beasts.

Finally, because of Fang Xingjian's massacre, the battle in the maze ended much faster than it had been expected. When there were only fifty people left in the maze, Governor Devitt announced the end of the competition.

Chapter 221 Eat

‘Hmm, hmmm. This time around, I’ve killed hundreds of ferocious beasts in one breath and even killed a level 20 monster.’

Anderson was sitting on Governor Devitt’s ice dragon which gradually landed at the maze’s entrance. He kept thinking to himself, ‘With this, compared to me, there shouldn’t be anyone who performed even more outstandingly, right?’

Just as he was thinking about this, he saw Fang Xingjian was already standing at the entrance, carrying chunks of meat with black hair all over it on his back.

Many people were surrounding Fang Xingjian and talking to him. That feeling of being surrounded by people in admiration made Shadow Death God Anderson extremely jealous.

“What’s this? Why are they all crowding around Fang Xingjian?” Anderson frowned. Suddenly, he took a closer look at that small mountain of meat Fang Xingjian was carrying, then he blinked and said, “That is...”

Hoult answered, “The Colossal Armed Ape. Why, doesn’t the Shadow Death God have the ability to observe from afar? You didn’t see that battle?”

Anderson obviously would not say that he had turned all his focus onto the level 20 ferocious beast he was up against and thus had not had any additional effort to observe other places. He merely mumbled, “To think that he killed a level 21 ferocious beast.”

“And it was an instant kill,” Hoult said. “Haha, seems like this time around, the one fighting with me for first place will not be you but Fang Xingjian.”

“He’s just lucky.”

Anderson looked at the Colossal Armed Ape’s corpse with his face

slightly pale. Although he had remained stubborn while he spoke, he already had a faint feeling that he might truly not be Fang Xingjian's match.

‘How could this be? My Shadow Death God's progression has increased my strength by 5 points, agility by 7 points, reaction by 5 points, endurance by 5 points, and flexibility by 5 points. It completely surpassed the attribute growth of a Windstorm Sword Hero.

‘I can even turn into a shadow and move in that state, use Shadow Coffin to reduce my opponent's defence, and there's also my Killing technique... How can I be weaker than a Windstorm Sword Hero?’

Putting Anderson aside, David was also looking at Fang Xingjian in disbelief, as if he had just seen a ghost. Fang Xingjian seemed to have sensed David though sword Qis and turned to face him.

Looking at the eerie smile on Fang Xingjian's face, David unconsciously lowered his head, not daring to meet his gaze.

‘Why did it become like this?’

‘To think that he could win against a level 21 ferocious beast? How can this be possible?’

David could only keep on consoling himself, ‘It'll be alright. The third stage, the Pantheon Monument Observation, tests one's talent. It has nothing to do with one's battle abilities. Maybe Fang Xingjian will get eliminated there.’

However, even David himself found these words hard to belief. Fang Xingjian was a genius who had attained Heaven's Perception at the age of seventeen. In terms of talent, there was no way that David could win against Fang Xingjian.

He could only slip back to his room and begin worrying endlessly about the Regional Selection and Fang Xingjian.

Hamil let out a sigh and said, “I've been eliminated. So, I'll be

leaving. Wish you guys good luck and get good results.”

Looking towards Fang Xingjian, Manny, and Rota, disappointment spread out in Hamil’s eyes. Rota said, “There are too many strong competitors this year. I don’t know how long I can persist either. You can just take it that you’re heading back to Kirst first to wait for me.”

“I didn’t say that I’m heading back to Kirst.” Hamil smiled and said, “I still need to stay and cheer you guys on.”

On the platform, Lilia smiled and let out a breath. She pat her chest and said, “I almost died from the anxiety earlier. For a moment, I thought that Teacher was going to be in trouble.”

Kirst’s City Lord furrowed his brows, not saying a word. It was because Fang Xingjian’s speed could have already surpassed his overwhelmingly. This meant that if Fang Xingjian was bent on leaving, he might not be able to hold him back.

Kirst’s City Lord was a Conferred Knight, a level 25 Conferred Knight.

‘He is just at the first transition...’

...

All the remaining fifty Knights went back to the dining hall and dormitory to rest and prepare for the third stage, the Pantheon Monument Observation, which would be held the next day.

Excitement flashed past the eyes of numerous people. The Pantheon Monument Observation... Comprehending the martial arts of a Divine level expert... How exciting was this?

There were a total of eight Pantheon Monuments across the Empire, with one in each Regional Academy, that had been created by the eight Divine level experts who had founded the Empire. The one in the Great Western Region had been created by the Melancholic Monarch, and it contained his martial arts.

However, the Knights who had remained had gone all out during the fight in the maze and thus had expended a large amount of their energies. Although they were all excited to be able to observe the Pantheon Monument the next day, when it was time for their meal, they still needed to eat. Moreover, the food in the Regional Academy was not only free, but they also tasted good, and the ingredients were all precious heavenly and earthly treasures as well as ferocious beasts.

Manny, Fang Xingjian and Rota sat once again at the same table. Fang Xingjian looked at Manny and said, “I heard that you had also observed the Pantheon Monument the last time you participated in the Regional Selection?”

Manny smiled, nodded and said, “The Pantheon Monument has messages left behind by a Divine level expert. In this stage, Wei Leng and yourself, having attained Heaven’s Perception, would definitely be at a better advantage.

“It’s said that if you have outstanding talent, you’ll be able to comprehend one set of martial arts from that Pantheon Monument. If your talent is unrivalled across ten thousand people, you’ll be able to comprehend a second level, and the martial arts you pick up will be even greater.

“If yours is a rare talent that comes along once every hundred years, then you will have the chance to comprehend the third level martial arts. It’s a pity that I had only comprehended up to the second level. It’s also unlikely for my outcome to be different this time around. As for the variations for the third level and onward, I have no idea.”

As the two of them were chatting, giant plates of roasted meat, braised meat, black pepper chops, meat soup, meat burgers and other foods were served. Rota frowned and asked, “Why is the food different from the yesterday’s? And they are all meat?”

Fang Xingjian picked up a piece of black pepper chop and started

eating. The meat was very tender, showing the chef's excellent grasp on meat texture. It was neither too dry nor too raw, and it went well with the strong black pepper taste, causing the corners of Fang Xingjian's lips to curl up slightly.

After taking a bite of the chop, he said, "I got them to make some dishes with that Colossal Armed Ape. It's a level 21 ferocious beast. We can't possibly let it go to waste."

Instantly, Rota and Manny started to feel a little bit disgusted. It was still a bit hard for them to eat an ape.

Just then, another two huge egg-like objects were sent up. Puzzled, Manny asked, "Do Colossal Armed Apes lay eggs?"

"These aren't eggs; they're eyeballs. I got the chefs to prepare it specially." Fang Xingjian grabbed an eyeball and took a bite out of it. Instantly, a spicy taste exploded out in his mouth. It was probably the chef's first time cooking the eyes of a Colossal Armed Ape, and he had used a large amount of spices, chillies, sesame oil and other ingredients to try to cover up the raw taste. It tasted very fragrant and spicy, and when matched with the eyeball's springy and smooth texture, Fang Xingjian could not help but nod in satisfaction after eating it.

"Aren't you guys eating?"

Both Manny and Rota immediately shook their heads. When the other Knights in the vicinity saw Fang Xingjian eating these foods, they could not help but frown as well. Some of them even had their mouths agape, as if they had seen something terrifying.

Just then, another string of chopped up sausages was sent up. Rota exhaled, thinking that a normal dish served had finally been served.

She picked up a piece of sausage with her fork and started eating. However, after a few bites, she said, "Why does this sausage seems overcooked? Mmm... and why does it have a stench..."

Fang Xingjian said with indifference, “Those aren’t sausages. That is the part on the lower body of the Colossal Armed Ape...”

Pffft....

“Fang Xingjian! I’m going to kill you!”

“Alright, alright. Rota, put down your spear. Xingjian didn’t do this on purpose.”

“But look at him! This guy is actually still eating it! I’m going to burn them all up!”

Having eaten and drank his fill, another night passed by, and Fang Xingjian and the others finally welcomed the third stage of the Regional Selection, Pantheon Monument Observation.

Chapter 222 Pantheon Monument

Observation (Part I)

Under the lead of an assistant examiner, fifty examinees came to a tremendous copper hall. Right down to every single inch of the hall, it was forged from copper and the workmanship was flawless.

Once they entered the entrance to the copper hall, many examinees felt a solemn and sacred aura gushing toward them.

Right before them was an extremely vast hall filled with lighted candles. There was not a single pillar inside, but there was a hunchbacked old man with white hair and a face covered with so many wrinkles that they seemed like deep trenches.

He seemed to be even older than the Commissioner of Education, Luke, one of the examiners for the previous two stages. His clothes seemed very tattered, as if they were the white strips of cloth wrapped around a mummy's body.

Even after all the examinees had entered the hall, the elderly man was still looking to the front, at that inconspicuous stone monument before him. The stone monument was a cubic shape ten meters wide, tall and long. All four sides had different diagrams, while the top and bottom were empty.

Looking at this tremendous Pantheon Monument, everyone turned solemn and respectful.

The elderly man's eyes were fixed on the stone monument, as though he was in a trance. It was only when all the examinees had approached within thirty meters of the stone monument that he started to talk.

His old, hoarse voice was like a saw sawing on a block of wood. The elderly man said slowly, "You are the Knights participating in this year's Regional Selection? I'm in charge of guarding the Pantheon Monument, and even Devitt and the others are not

allowed to come in freely. You have twelve hours to comprehend the Pantheon Monument. When the twelve hours are up, leave. They'll be waiting for all of you outside.

“Remember, you're only allowed to look. You're not allowed to touch.

“As for the profoundness behind the Pantheon Monument, although the examiners and your teachers would have told you about it, I'll still go by the book and bring it up one more time.

“Back then, the Melancholic Monarch had left a tremendous amount of information on the Pantheon Monument using ether particles to channel in the information. After all, everything in this world was formed from ether particles. So, it was natural that the Melancholic Monarch would leave behind his comprehension of martial arts in the Pantheon Monument through ether particles.

“Thus, the Pantheon Monument holds the martial arts legacy of the Melancholic Monarch. Everyone will be able to comprehend a set of martial arts based on your individual ability to comprehend.

“However, comprehending martial arts is just the first level. Only after you've comprehended the second level on a deeper basis will you be able to let the skill evolve and make the martial arts you've comprehended more complete.

“Different understandings and interpretations will allow you to comprehend different martial arts, and the limits to each set of martial arts are also different. There are some people who are able to comprehend a complete set of martial arts after reaching the second level, but there are also some who will need to reach the third level before they're able to comprehend a complete set of martial arts. There are even level four and five. Naturally, the more profound martial arts you comprehend, the more formidable you will become. However, the highest record at the moment is Devitt's level four.

“As for the interpretation and the martial arts chosen, it'll all

depends on your understanding. Everyone's understanding is different, and thus the martial arts and limits you attain will be different as well."

After saying this, the elderly man stopped talking and became fully focused on the Pantheon Monument, as though he was only concerned with the mysteries of the Pantheon Monument.

Manny used his Reduced Force Field to tremble the air carefully and sent his voice to Fang Xingjian, "This person is the Governor from two terms back. He has been here, where the Pantheon Monument is, since twenty years ago, protecting it closely while keeping it in sight."

Fang Xingjian nodded and saw that the rest of the people had headed over, looking at the Pantheon Monument with curious, astonished and excited gazes.

David was the first to walk up. Bearing two dark circles, he looked at the Pantheon Monument agitatedly, trying hard to comprehend the profoundness within.

After seeing Fang Xingjian's performance in killing the Colossal Armed Ape, he had not been able to sleep at all the previous night as he was under tremendous stress.

Fang Xingjian's performance in the first two stages had given him too much pressure. Fang Xingjian was not a Conferred Knight, yet he had a battle prowess close to that of a Conferred Knight's. How could that not make David feel stressed out?

Moreover, he had already made an enemy out of Fang Xingjian. Therefore, he put in a lot of effort and focus into observing the diagrams on the Pantheon Monument. However, the more he did so, the more exasperated he felt. His mind was filled with Fang Xingjian, of himself being publicly shamed in the Hundred Blossom Banquet, of Fang Xingjian shattering the metal pillar, and of Fang Xingjian killing the Colossal Armed Ape.

The more this happened, the harder it was for him to calm down and comprehend the Pantheon Monument. He only felt that chest was stuffy, and he could not comprehend anything at all.

However, the more he could not comprehend anything, the worse his mood got, and very quickly, he was covered in perspiration.

On the other end, Manny walked up to the Pantheon Monument slowly. His expression was very carefree, and he appeared relaxed. After all, he had already comprehended the Pantheon Monument once and knew that his limit was at the second level. Therefore, he did not plan to insist too much on this.

Rota did not start comprehending the Pantheon Monument the first moment she stepped up. It was her first time seeing the Pantheon Monument and the first time she was participating in the Regional Selection, so she felt too excited to the point that her heart palpitated too quickly.

One had to be able to remain calm without batting an eyelid even if the sky were to fall. The more important the issue, the more one needed to remain calm and not panic.

Therefore, she knew that the more important the manual, the more profound the martial arts and the more one must not be overly anxious. Otherwise, it would just be a case of more haste and less speed. Restlessness was a great taboo in the study of martial arts.

Therefore, when she saw the other examinees who were rushing over anxiously, she smiled and shook her head. Then she sat down cross-legged, closed her eyes and meditated.

She did not start cultivating nor did she think about anything complicated. Rota merely wanted to clear her mind and calm down before she started to comprehend the Pantheon Monument seriously in a full-spirited and clear-minded state.

However, compared to how she needed to meditate and clear her mind, Anderson and Hoult were a notch higher.

They did not feel anxiety or agitation at all.

Anderson was indisputably a genius. How could he not be one when he could transition into a Shadow Death God, something which no one in the Empire had succeeded for the past 200 years? Moreover, he had the ability to not forget things he had seen only once. He went up to the Pantheon Monument, took a walk around it and was able to remember every little mark, diagram, and color on it.

He then shut his eyes while in his mind, akin to a calculator at work, the diagrams on all four sides of the Pantheon Monument continued to be broken down, reformed, switched around and even twisted.

Hoult's eyes were filled with an unprecedented confidence. In his gaze, everything on the monument appeared ever so clear.

The many scratches were astral traces, while the many dots were the brightest stars, and those colors were various strong winds and auras.

‘What Teacher said was true. The Melancholic Monarch did inherit the legacy of our Myriad Stars Palace. This Pantheon Monument he left behind are the records of the immemorial star charts.

‘This star chart is just right in complementing my Myriad Stars Meditating Technique. I shouldn't be far from attaining Heaven's Perception now.’

Hoult's gaze lit up as he looked at the Pantheon Monument Observation like he was hungry or thirsty. After a few minutes passed, it was as if he could see countless stars clashing against each other in his mind. There were light rays shooting out and explosions from the earth's magnetic fields. The messages left

behind by the Divine level expert on the Pantheon Monument were being transmitted into his brain directly, showing him the stars in the universe through a virtual reality simulation.

Gradually, a set of mental cultivation method by the name of Astral Sword appeared in his Stats Window.

To other people, Hoult's body was suddenly lit up with many micro lights. It was the sign that he had succeeded in comprehending the Pantheon Monument.

Various lights represented the ether particles, which made up the Pantheon Monument, flowed into the cultivator's body together with the information they contained. This meant that he had attained some success in the comprehension.

This was something left behind by the Divine level expert, Melancholic Monarch, in order to differentiate the comprehension level of each individual cultivator. If one were to gain success in comprehending this, he would be able to show such signs within a day.

The elder, who had initially still been engrossed in the profoundness of the Pantheon Monument, suddenly stared at Hoult, who was deep in comprehension with his eyes wide-open. 'So fast? How many minutes has it only been? To think that he has already comprehended the profoundness within the Pantheon Monument?

'This Pantheon Monument contains boundless mysteries, and each individual's line of thoughts and interpretations are all different. However, there has not been anyone who could comprehend them so fast. How did he do it?

'I wonder how he interpreted the Pantheon Monument: what method he used; what martial arts he comprehended; and what level is he able to reach?'

All the examinees looking at Hoult were showing gazes filled

with envy. To think that he was able to comprehend the profoundness of the Pantheon Monument in less than five minutes. What a terrifying talent!

Anderson looked at this scene and let out a cold snort, feeling that the white light was extremely dazzling and hurting his eyes. He shut his eyes and continued to comprehend the things he had ingrained in his memory. Various information were being regrouped endlessly, giving rise to different results.

David and the others became even more anxious and panicky after being provoked by Hoult. However, the more nervous they felt, the more messy their minds became, and thus were unable to decrypt any information.

After half an hour had passed, Wei Leng, who had attained Heaven's Perception, also had spots of light shining all over his body. Through the information collection via the Heaven's Perception, he had also directly comprehended the martial arts from the Pantheon Monument.

Just then, as Fang Xingjian was looking at the Pantheon Monument, a series of familiar feelings flashed past his mind incessantly.

Chapter 223 Pantheon Monument

Observation (Part II)

Heaven's Perception allowed Fang Xingjian to see within a ten-meter radius. Therefore, even though he was blind, he could still see the diagrams on all four sides of the Pantheon Monument clearly.

At the start, he only felt that the diagrams on the Pantheon Monument were a bit familiar, but when he saw a diagram that was like a scoop, his heart skipped a beat.

“The Big Dipper?”

He started to recall the many constellations and star charts back on Earth. He had learned these things many years back when he had been attending school. However, his memories of them were very faded.

Despite this, Fang Xingjian was, after all, a Knight with a level 5 mental cultivation method. His brain's memory and calculation abilities had far surpassed what they used to be. Although his recollections of star charts were very distant, they were still stored in his brain. His mind started to work like a calculator, retrieving details a bit at a time and digging out all his memories with regards to the star charts.

One minute, two minutes, ten minutes... After half an hour, he started to recall slowly and gradually. He remembered that class about five years ago, when his geography teacher had been explaining about star charts and constellations.

Although this memory was still hidden in his brain, they had long since become blurry, and it was almost impossible to recall any of it.

However, having attained level 5 in his mental cultivation method, the memory, calculation and contemplation abilities of

his brain had improved greatly. After spending half an hour recalling, he finally succeeded.

He had not only recalled the basic introduction his teacher had given back then but also the four star charts that had flashed on the powerpoint slides.

‘Ursa Minor... Ursa Major... Cassiopeia... Draco...’ [1]

Many constellations appeared in his mind and were then matched up to the diagrams on the Pantheon Monument.

The Pantheon Monument was covered with star charts on all four sides. They were the star charts for all four seasons, with spring, summer, autumn and winter stars engraved on all four diagrams respectively.

‘But... Why are the star charts on the Pantheon Monument the same as what I had seen on Earth? No, there seems to be some missing parts. Despite this, they are still generally the same.’

Countless questions flashed through Fang Xingjian’s mind, ‘Did the Melancholic Monarch go to Earth two hundred years ago? Or...’

Just as Fang Xingjian was trying to recollect and contemplate, continuously observing the star charts on the Pantheon Monument, Anderson also let out a loud hissing sound. He had comprehended the first level of the Pantheon Monument’s profoundness and had white light appearing all over his body. A set of martial art started to form in his Stats Window.

Fang Xingjian took a quick glance at Anderson with his Heaven’s Perception and then turned away. Now, all his attention was taken up by the Pantheon Monument before him.

‘This Pantheon Monument was created by a Divine level expert in the Empire two hundred years ago. No matter where the stars came from, they represent the connection between Earth and Miracle World, which definitely exceeds the seventeen years I had

originally thought it to be.'

Seventeen years ago, the passageway leading to Miracle World had opened up in Demonic City. The entire Demonic City had been invaded by the Other World, and both worlds had a part of itself combined with the other. From there, various stories, experts, clans and legends had been born.

In those seventeen years, the world went through transformational changes. Countless countries had joined forces to tap into the powers from Miracle World. They had even joined forces with the three Mage Kings and started infiltrating the Miracle World.

However, Fang Xingjian suddenly realized today that the connection between Miracle World and Earth had not just been from seventeen years ago. It might possibly go all the way back to two hundred years ago. How astonishing was this discovery?

Manny, on the other side, had once again engrossed himself into comprehending the Pantheon Monument. Spots of light first appeared all over his body, then a circle of light appeared on top of his head. It represented that he had comprehended level 2 of the Pantheon Monument's profoundness.

Of course, Manny had comprehended the Pantheon Monument before, so no one was astonished by his performance.

Currently, Hoult and Wei Leng were at level 1, while Manny was at level 2. The elderly man in charge of guarding the Pantheon Monument nodded to himself.

'This year's Regional Selection has definitely gathered many talents. To think that there are already people who have comprehended the mysteries of the Pantheon Monument in such a short time.

'However, the Pantheon Monument contains boundless mysteries and everyone's understanding and interpretations are

different. Thus, the limits each individual can reach are different as well.

‘Currently, the best explication method is still the Tianyuan Explication, left behind by Devitt thirty years ago. He had comprehended up to the fourth level and evolved his Killing technique three times in order for it to become the Hundred Dragon Ice Incantation today.

‘According to the Tianyuan Explication, we all thought that the limits of the Pantheon Monument’s mysteries should be at about the fifth or sixth level.’

The greatest wish of the elder who guarded the Pantheon Monument was to be able to resolve all the mysteries the Melancholic Monarch had left behind on the Pantheon Monument.

‘Only the proper explication method will be able to resolve all the hidden mysteries to the Pantheon Monument and comprehend the true legacy left behind by the Melancholic Monarch.

‘Although with the Tianyuan Explication that Devitt used, Devitt had comprehended up to the fourth level, it was still not everything. It goes to say that even the Tianyuan Explication isn’t the correct method of resolving it.’

On the other hand, white light was suddenly exploding out from Hoult, forming a circle of light on top of his head. He had comprehended the second level of the mysteries, causing the Astral Sword to transform into the Black Domain Astral Sword.

The elder had an astonished look and continued to watch Hoult in anticipation.

Once again, Hoult’s transformation agitated the other examinees. Everyone turned their focus onto the Pantheon Monument before them and could not help but wish that they could break the Pantheon Monument apart and take a look at it.

Hoult had once again got ahead of Anderson, causing his

countenance to turn grim. His mind started churning at a very high speed. Those scratches in his eyes were like shadows shifting under sunlight. They recorded a set of extremely profound force exertion method.

Then as he continued to sense the messages on the Pantheon Monument, the images in his mind seemed to become three dimensional as well.

‘It’s not just force exertions using the physical body.

‘There are also changes to the footwork!’

The spots of light on his body started burning up furiously. It was as if he would be able to attain a breakthrough at any time now.

Rota let out a long breath and stood up. She had already calmed herself down and was ready to study the Pantheon Monument.

Fang Xingjian looked at the Pantheon Monument, and as the star charts in his mind grew increasingly clear, he suddenly noticed some problems.

‘Why are there missing parts on the Pantheon Monument’s star charts?

‘Everyone can comprehend different martial arts from the Pantheon Monument and still comprehend more and more mysteries, evolving the martial arts they had learnt.

‘This is because the Melancholic Monarch had inserted a lot of information into the Pantheon Monument.’

Based on the principles of the Miracle World, everything in the world is formed from ether particles. The Pantheon Monument was no exception. And when one’s Heaven’s Perception has reached a 100% ether synchronization rate, one will be able to leave any information he wishes onto any object and store it there for hundreds or thousands of years.

‘The Melancholic Monarch hid many martial arts into the star

charts, and based on the individual's interpretation of the Pantheon Monument, one will be able to comprehend different martial arts. The deeper the level of comprehension, the deeper the understanding of the martial arts and thus leading to the evolution of their martial arts. This will then eventually lead to a complete set of acquired martial arts.

‘Different explication methods will result in different martial arts comprehended. Some martial arts would be completed at the second level, while some will only be fully completed on the third level.

‘The different levels of comprehension are the different segments of the mysteries hidden by the Melancholic Monarch. Multiple rounds of evolution will make the martial arts more and more complete.

‘And based on the different explication method, the limits of one's comprehension will be different, and the martial arts they gain will vary as well. There are some which will be completed at the second level, while others may require up to the third or even fourth level.’

These things that Fang Xingjian thought about had already been considered by the many other people who were studying the Pantheon Monument. However, the main problem was that for the past over two hundred years, no one had been able to find the right explication method for the Pantheon Monument.

Fang Xingjian contemplated the missing parts on the Pantheon Monument's star charts and thought to himself, ‘What would happen if I were to fill in the missing parts of the diagrams?’

[1] Names of different constellations.

Chapter 224 Pantheon Monument Observation (Part III)

Fang Xingjian tried once again to recall, bit by bit, the star charts he had seen in his geography class.

There had been a total of four star charts, with each representing the stars in each respective season: spring; summer; autumn; and winter. As the memory was from too long ago, Fang Xingjian's memory of many of the details on the star charts were not very clear.

Therefore, in order to complete the star charts on the Pantheon Monument, he had to recall the finest details of the Earth's star charts.

His brain started to circulate intensively as streams of bioelectromagnetic currents stimulated the nerves in his brain continuously, presenting the information from the many shattered pieces of his memory to him.

"You don't belong to our Fang Clan!"

"You're a b*stard illegitimate child!"

"Beat him up! Everyone beat him up together!"

Fang Xingjian's brows furrowed together. However, he did not stop and simply continued to dig through his memory, searching for the many pieces of memories left behind from his past.

"Grandmother, I'd like to pick up martial arts."

"Martial arts? Who brought up martial arts to you? Why would you have this idea?"

"I... I saw that Uncle keeps practicing his martial arts."

"... Forget about picking up martial arts. I'll send you to school from tomorrow onward. Study well and your future will be a

hundred times better than if you were to pick up martial arts. Don't think about martial arts so often.

“One more thing. In the future, don't come to my study. You don't even have any basic manners.”

Fang Xingjian let out a long exhale as he continued to dig through his memory shards. However, his fists clenched tightly without him realising it, and his breath grew heavier as well.

“Fang Xingjian, don't you change your clothes?”

“I... I only have this set of clothes.”

“Haha, he stinks! Everyone, don't get close to him. Otherwise, we'll also stink from his stench!”

Fang Xingjian pressed down hard on his forehead and felt that the memory shards, which he thought he had long forgotten, were now gushing forth, letting him experience the sadness, anger and vengeance which he had been through in the past.

Finally, his consciousness seemed to enter deep into his memories, to a part which he had never attempted to recall so strongly before.

“Are you sure it's this?”

“The results for the seventh season have already been decided. What difference is it going to make even if we choose?”

Fang Xingjian clenched both his fists tightly as clashing sounds of blades seemed to be ringing out around him. ‘Whose voice is this? Why is there this voice in my memory?’

The next moment, Fang Xingjian let out a deep breath, temporarily putting this strange memory in his consciousness aside. It was because he had completely uncovered the memories relating to the star charts of the four seasons, including all the details about all the constellations on the charts.

The time he had taken to recall everything took Fang Xingjian a

whole two hours. To outsiders, he merely appeared as though he was standing before the Pantheon Monument, contemplating.

However, two hours had passed by, and Anderson had comprehended to the second level, while Hoult had approached the Pantheon Monument with his inherited Myriad Star Palace legacy and stepped into the third level. Streams of white light gathered on his back, forming another circle of light.

With the help of Heaven's Perception, Wei Leng had also stepped into the second level of comprehension.

Rota looked at the contents on the monument without panicking. Manny frowned occasionally and smiled occasionally, seeming to have entered at a crucial point for attaining a breakthrough.

David was breaking out in sweat but still showed no signs of attaining any breakthrough. However, he also calmed down gradually, even appearing to be slightly at ease. It was because although he had not attained any breakthrough with regards to the Pantheon Monument, neither did Fang Xingjian.

He saw Fang Xingjian standing there, feeling sad at times and feeling angry at times. Fang Xingjian was even clenching his fists occasionally, yet showed no signs of comprehending anything. Seeing this, David felt like laughing.

After all, even if he could not comprehend the Pantheon Monument, it would be fine if Fang Xingjian was in the same plight.

The old man, who was guarding the monument, also shook his head to himself when he saw Fang Xingjian. He had received news earlier that a seventeen-year-old genius, who had attained Heaven's Perception, was participating in this year's Regional Selection. However, looking at how things were now, this lad was still too anxious and was not calm enough mentally. When he noticed other people were comprehending the Pantheon Monument in turns, he appeared to feel grief, anger, and anxiety.

If this were to go on, he would only end up unable to calm himself down to focus on the comprehension, resulting in him failing the Regional Selection.

Therefore, the old man planned to advise Fang Xingjian and give him some pointers for him to keep a calm mind and try again.

However, just then, a hint of light appeared around Fang Xingjian.

Fang Xingjian had finally completed the last part of the star charts, and immediately, the image of the Pantheon Monument in his mind shone brilliantly as countless information gushed toward him. He seemed to be able to see countless stars circulating around their orbits for ten thousands, hundred thousands or even millions of years.

“Between heaven and earth, power rules.

“Between various powers, astral reigns supreme.

“Amongst all the powers between heaven and earth, the forces of the stars are the most violent, greatest, strongest, toughest, and the most supreme.”

Fang Xingjian seemed to hear a man’s voice, then a new skill appeared in his Stats Window gradually—Astral Powers.

“So, he ended up comprehending?” The old man looked at the spots of light around Fang Xingjian and nodded, breaking into a satisfied smile. He then wanted to turn to look at Hoult, eager to see if Hoult could breakthrough and reach the fourth level of comprehension.

However, at the next moment, his eyes were wide-open and his mouth agape. It was as if his eyeballs would pop out any moment.

Suddenly, a circle of light appeared above Fang Xingjian’s head. He had broken through once again, stepping into the second level of comprehension.

Fang Xingjian then took a step forward and his body floated up slowly. Streams of light formed on his back, and he opened his mouth slightly, saying, "Between heaven and earth, power rules."

The next moment, a light circle formed behind his head. Fang Xingjian had suddenly broken through and attained the third level of comprehension.

"How is this possible?" The old man look at this scene in disbelief. He had never seen anyone able to break through three levels at one go.

From afar, Anderson, Hoult and Wei Leng also stopped what they were doing and looked at Fang Xingjian as though they were looking at a monster.

In his heart, David was screaming out loud. He rubbed his eyes continuously, as if he could not believe what he was seeing.

Rota, Manny and all the other examinees also looked over at Fang Xingjian because his rate of breakthrough was simply too astonishing. To think that he had managed to comprehend three levels of the mysteries at one go.

However, amidst everyone's horrified gazes, spots of light started to form at Fang Xingjian's shoulders once again.

Endless kacha kacha sounds could be heard. Those spots of light formed into a new circle of light as though they had shape and texture and floated on Fang Xingjian's shoulders.

He had broken through to the fourth level of the mysteries!

However, in Fang Xingjian's consciousness, countless pieces of information were still swarming into his brain. He then accepted them all with his astonishing talent, determination, and comprehension ability.

Chapter 225 Pantheon Monument

Observation (Part IV)

Amidst everyone's astonished gazes, two strips of light sprouted out from Fang Xingjian's spine, entangling together endlessly and eventually becoming a fourth circle of light.

He broke through to the fifth level of the mysteries!

The Astral Powers had gone through four levels of evolution, and on the Stats Window, the words had now become 'Prodigious Astral Divine Powers'.

However, it was still incomplete. Fang Xingjian could sense that the information was still gushing into his brain. Various pieces of knowledge, including those on stellar magnetism forces, strong destructive forces of astral bodies, as well as gravitational forces, exploded in his brain one after another.

It was like a waterfall of information appearing on a computer screen. Fang Xingjian's brain continued to circulate endlessly, as though it was a sponge absorbing all these pieces of information.

His topmost talent in swords art also gave him astonishing perseverance, courage, comprehension ability, and logic. This allowed him to absorb at a speed that made one's hair stand on ends.

When he broke through and reached the fifth level, the old man's eyes were already staring like they were a pair of gleaming light bulbs.

Hoult felt as if his whole world was going to collapse. 'How could this happen? The right explication to this Ancient Star Chart should be the one I'm using now. This is definitely a star chart, but how could he explicate it faster than me? And he's able to reach a higher phase?!'

Anderson, Wei Leng, Manny, Rota and the other examinees all

looked dazedly at the circles of light behind Fang Xingjian. Their minds were blank, and they were all speechless.

What Fang Xingjian had done was truly too astonishing and too eye-popping! Who had heard of anyone comprehending five levels at one go?

However, under such a scenario, another circle of light was forming at the back of Fang Xingjian's waist. He had broken through to the sixth level!

"Six levels? Are there really six levels? The Pantheon Monument really has six levels?" The old man who guarded the monument trembled suddenly. To be able to see the mysteries of the Pantheon Monument solved in his lifetime... He could truly die without any regrets.

'What could it be? A martial art that can hold six levels of mysteries... The Melancholic Monarch's core legacy... What sort of heaven shaking and earth shattering martial art could it be?'

Everyone was all looking at Fang Xingjian, and their gazes filled were with anticipation. There were no longer any emotions of envy... Right now, what they were most curious about was what skill had Fang Xingjian acquired?

Just as they were astonished to the point that they had almost turned numb and thought that everything was finally over, Fang Xingjian clenched down on his teeth and let out a huge bellow, "There's more!"

In that instant, even the empty space trembled by a violent burst of energy. The entire Pantheon Monument started to shake, shooting out stream after stream of dazzling white light.

"What happened?"

"What has happened?"

Amidst everyone's gazes being astonished to the point of going numb, a sixth circle of light appeared on Fang Xingjian's back. He

had reached the seventh level.

Right then, in his Stats Window, the new skill's name had become Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves.

Then, amidst everyone's complicated gazes of surprise and horror, a golden figure emerged slowly from the Pantheon Monument.

The old man, who guarded the monument, suddenly had his mouth agape, saying, "Lord Monarch?" The elder had seen the portrait of the Great Western Region Regional Academy's founder, the Melancholic Monarch, before. The golden figure that had came out from the Pantheon Monument looked exactly the same as the Melancholic Monarch! How could he not be astonished?

Hearing what the old man said, everyone present also looked at the golden figure in shock. If this person who had suddenly appeared was truly the Melancholic Monarch, then would this Divine level expert not have lived for over two hundred years?

A hair standing feeling arose within everyone, but that golden figure did not appear to mind that. He merely looked at Fang Xingjian, who had been surrounded by six circles of light, and then smiled and nodded, satisfaction written all over his face.

He then looked at the other examinees, who were comprehending the Pantheon Monument, and broke into a smile.

His mouth moved very slightly, but no voice came out. It was as though he wanted to say something but could not do so.

In the next moment, the entire golden figure burst out and become rays of light, shooting out toward the people present.

Everyone wanted to dodge, but how could they be faster than light? The light beams shot into their bodies.

However, this was not an attack but a gift.

Hoult, Anderson, Manny and Rota were pierced by the light

beams, and the moment they were hit, various images started to appear in their consciousness. Their talents, which were outstanding to begin with, were all unleashed completely.

This light beam seemed to have the ability to unleash the potential hidden deep in the human body. In that instant, a hint of inspiration appeared in their brains. It was an inspiration to attain Heaven's Perception.

Rota clenched her fists in disbelief. Her brain was circulating, and she could feel that there seemed to be voices in the surroundings, trying to speak to her.

"This is... the inspiration for attaining Heaven's Perception? I feel like I'm only a step away from attaining Heaven's Perception."

The same feeling rose from within Hoult, Anderson and Manny.

The old man, who guarded the monument, sighed, "Seems like this is the last message the Melancholic Monarch left behind in the Pantheon Monument. When someone uncovers all the mysteries behind the Pantheon Monument, this message will appear and help the few people among those present who have the greatest potential to attain Heaven's Perception."

He swept a glance at the remaining examinees, but the meaning behind his words was very clear.

It was obvious that other than Hoult, Anderson, Manny and Rota, as well as Wei Leng who had attained Heaven's Perception, the other examinee's potential were not regarded by the Melancholic Monarch. They could not even attain Heaven's Perception.

Hearing these words, David was overcome by anger.

"Why?! Why did the Melancholic Monarch not choose me?! Putting aside Anderson and Hoult, since one of them is the Shadow Death God while the other is the grand disciple of the Astral Ancestor... What is the deal with the other two? How are they in

the position to compete with me?!”

However, at the next moment, as he looked at Fang Xingjian who was surrounded by six circles of light, David felt as though someone had poured a bucket of cold water over his head, causing him to feel ice-cold all the way to his heart.

To think that Fang Xingjian had comprehended seven levels of mysteries hidden behind the Pantheon Monument and had completely resolved it... This made him feel great a sense of loss and despair.

The old man walked up to Fang Xingjian and saw that he was landing slowly from mid-air. All six of the circles of light behind him shattered.

The old man looked at Fang Xingjian earnestly and asked, “What did you comprehend? What kind of skill is it? Is it the Melancholic Monarch’s legacy?”

Everyone else turned over to look at Fang Xingjian too. They were clearly extremely curious to find out what Fang Xingjian had comprehended. The all-powerful Melancholic Monarch from two hundred years back, who had founded the Empire with seven other Divine level experts and had also founded the Regional Academy, and then created the Pantheon Monument... What kind of legacy had he left behind in the Pantheon Monument?

Who would not be curious? Who would not be agitated?

However, meeting their curious gazes, Fang Xingjian cast a glance at his Stats Window and asked, “Must I say it?”

Chapter 226 Pantheon Monument

Observation (Part V)

Hearing Fang Xingjian's words, helplessness flashed in everyone's eyes.

The old man guarding the monument let out a sigh and said, "If you don't want to share... Of course, you don't have to."

The martial arts he comprehended from the Pantheon Monument concerned the secrets behind the powers of countless Knights and Conferred Knights. So, of course, he could choose to keep it a secret.

However the old man continued, "But you must know that if you're willing to share the secrets you've comprehended, the academy will definitely offer you a tremendous compensation."

Fang Xingjian blinked and asked, "Would there be a level 30 Divine Remains Equipment?"

Hearing this, the old man started coughing and said angrily, "Do you think Divine Remains Equipments are like vegetables and can be gotten hold of easily?"

"But the Melancholic Monarch's legacy is not a vegetable either. Unless the academy is able to bring out a Divine Remains Equipment, I'll definitely not agree to reveal."

The old man looked at Fang Xingjian, feeling angry and torn. However, he was not a tyrannical person like the First Prince who would just take whatever he wished to. After all, he had previously been a Governor and the Headmaster of a Regional Academy. Naturally, he would not do something like bully people who were his juniors.

However, he still tried to advise Fang Xingjian, "Why do you need a Divine Remains Equipment? That thing can only be used for fighting and killing. Now that there has been peace in the Empire

for so long, what use will you have for it?

“The academy can provide you with other things. You must know that other than exchanging information with ether particles, you also need to exchange energies with ether particles for your cultivation after the second transition.

“Do you know which place has the highest concentration of ether particles in this world? That would of course have to be the Sacred Land which is one notch higher than Secret Realms.

“However, there are also different concentrations of ether particles in Sacred Lands. As long as you can reveal your explication method and the skill you’ve obtained, I can let you use the academy’s Sacred Land of the highest level for free! The ether particles there are one hundred times that of ordinary space!”

However, how could Fang Xingjian possibly share the explication method for comprehending the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers? As for the detailed information regarding the skill—after taking a look at the introduction for the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves, he was even more determined to not reveal it.

That was unless the other party could provide him with a Divine Remains Equipment. Only then would he consider sharing a version pruned-down version.

However, that old man still refused to give up. He continued to follow Fang Xingjian, chattering non-stop. Fang Xingjian could not be bothered with him and decided to simply sit there, waiting quietly for the twelve hours to be up.

Majority of the other students were no longer in the mood to comprehend the Pantheon Monument. Even if there were those who tried to do so, their minds were filled with Fang Xingjian’s amazing feat from earlier as well as the old man’s annoying voice, which was ringing out non-stop.

“What must I do before you’re willing to tell me? How about this,

I'll trade it for my Killing technique?

“Or... I have a level 29 Superior Divine Weapon... How about if I trade it for the Pantheon Monument's secret?

“How about this, I'll take you in as a disciple. I'm the Governor from two terms ago. I'll pass all my experience to you and let you become my last disciple?”

Fang Xingjian did not say a word, but all the other people could not help but stare at the old man.

The old man frowned and asked, “What's wrong?”

Manny could not hold it in and said, “This guy had even rejected becoming the disciple of Divine level expert, Holy Orison. Do you think you'll be able to move him?”

“What? You rejected Raul, that old fogey?” This old man's seniority was obviously very high. Even the Holy Orison was merely an old fogey to him. “Hmph, so what if you've rejected him? Although he's at the Divine level, one level higher than me, that's only because I've wasted too much time on trying to solve the mysteries the Pantheon Monument holds.

“My Killing technique and specialties are definitely all better than his. With your talent, if you were to learn them, you'll definitely be the first in the world. Mage Kings, Pope, and the others would all be no match for you.”

Everyone shook their heads. Rota and the others continued to comprehend the Pantheon Monument, relying on the inspiration for the Heaven's Perception. With the help from the Melancholic Monarch, they had activated their innate potential and instantly felt their minds were much clearer than before. Each of their actions would bring about the appearance of various inspirations.

During the process of comprehending the Pantheon Monument, Rota's body also lit up with many spots of light. She has broken through to the first level.

The rest of the people also calmed down and continued to comprehend the Pantheon Monument. David was the only one who could not do so. It was because Fang Xingjian's act of breaking through all seven levels of the Pantheon Monument's mysteries was too astonishing that his mind was now like boiling water, boiling up and circulating incessantly. There was no way he could calm down and think about the Pantheon Monument.

Fang Xingjian could not be bothered hearing what that old man had to say, so he started toward that additional skill, Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves.

This skill was very interesting, or rather, very special. It was a skill of the highest level which the Melancholic Monarch had created unintentionally.

Between various powers, astral reigned supreme.

This meant the strongest powers in the world were the powers generated from the rotation of the celestial bodies.

Putting other factors aside, it purely considered the scale in terms of numbers and the rotation of the celestial bodies. They were truly the strongest forces in this world.

Sufficient gravitational forces could move the Earth, the moon and the sun, creating neutron stars and blackholes. It could even twist time and space.

The Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves which Fang Xingjian acquired was the skill the Melancholic Monarch was the most pleased with. It could make the practitioner's powers greater by receiving enhancements from astral forces.

However, there were no stars in Miracle World. Therefore, Miracle World had borrowed gravitational forces. From what he understood, the earth under his foot was an extremely huge astral body as well, and thus, the powers he borrowed were, naturally, gravitational forces.

However, it was not a Killing technique nor was it a pure martial technique. Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves—just from the name alone, one could tell it consisted of Waves, and that it was a technique which trained up the body through gravitational forces.

Every thing in the world was affected by gravitational forces. At every single moment, the human body would be tied down by it, and till now, to the people in Miracle World, it was still thought to be caused by ether particles.

Therefore, the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves allowed one to adjust gravitational forces through ether particles, making use of the gravitational forces acting on one's body to circulate Waves endlessly for twenty-four hours a day.

The Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves could tap into gravitational forces in order to boost one's powers greatly. It was as if the practitioner would be able to solidify the tremendous amount of gravitational forces in his body. With this, each single movement would carry the powers to be able to overturn rivers and seas, and the person would be able to, during a battle, suddenly and explosively boost and control the gravitational forces acting on the objects around him.

As this was the strongest gravitational force in the universe, if one were to cultivate it to the highest level in the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves, they would be able to tear apart mountains, break through the oceans, or could even possibly twist time and space.

However, this Waves skill was flickering, as though it could disappear at anytime. It was because Fang Xingjian already had his Sonido Sword Zephyr Waves. Now that he had acquired the cultivation method for the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves, if he did not choose to switch over, the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves would gradually disappear.

This was because each person could only choose to circulate one

type of Waves.

Fang Xingjian would obviously choose the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves. His vital energy and blood as well as muscles started to circulate incessantly, and the Sonido Sword Zephyr Waves was gradually phased out as the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves began to circulate.

The Waves were being changed.

Chapter 227 Pantheon Monument

Observation (Part VI)

In the hall, unbeknownst to everyone, Fang Xingjian had started to switch the Waves he cultivated. Through the methods depicted by the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves, he moved the gravitational force under his feet through ether sword ripples and started to construct the Waves.

Before the twelve hours of the competition was up, he had finally completed the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves. Then after the level 7 Sonido Sword Zephyr Waves had been changed into the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves, it became level 1.

With each increase in level, the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves increased 10 points in strength, 3 points in agility, 3 points in reach, 3 points in endurance, and 3 points in flexibility. Just in terms of the attributes, with the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves enhancing his body through gravitational forces, it had far surpassed the Sonido Sword Zephyr Waves.

Moreover, he had not only gotten additional attributes. Cultivating the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers allowed him to control gravity, which meant he would even be able to fly.

However, at level 1, the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers only allowed him to float. He would have to reach at least level 5 to be able to fly.

What was more amazing was that the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers allowed him to perform Terra Ingurgitation, which in turn allowed him to absorb all the gravity from the objects within the distance of a couple of kilometers. He would then be able to add them onto himself, frantically adding on to his powers.

This meant that if a house had a million tons—if Fang Xingjian absorbed the gravitational force acting on the house, he would be

able to punch out with a power of a million tons.

Level 1 Prodigious Astral Divine Powers allowed him to absorb gravitational forces within a kilometer radius, while level 2 allowed two kilometers, and level 10 allowed ten kilometers.

The ability to absorb the gravitational forces within a ten kilometer radius meant that the area would all be turned into an area with zero gravity. This gravitational force which had disappeared could then be used by Fang Xingjian. It was like each punch or kick would be able to smash down with a force as heavy as a mountain or sea. How terrifying would that be?

There were noteworthy increases in his attributes, ability to adjust gravity, and ability to perform Terra Ingurgitation. This was what was so amazing about the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves. It was deserving of being the Melancholic Monarch's greatest legacy—a martial art which focused on one's foundations.

It was just that the Waves were overwhelmingly strong. He wondered how strong the Melancholic Monarch would be if he were to unleash his Killing technique, which was created for the sole purpose of killing enemies, at full power.

However, Fang Xingjian had relied on Heaven's Perception as well as the information from the Pantheon Monument to attain level 1 in the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves. These Waves required one to control gravity through ether particles and were actually Waves which only a second transition Conferred Knight could cultivate.

Therefore, it was already at Fang Xingjian's limits to be able to attain level 1. If he wanted to increase its level further, it would only be possible after he had completed the second transition.

It was because he would only be able to move the powers of the heavens and the earth through ether particles at the second transition. Only then would the technique take form in becoming a

martial art.

After the twelve hours of the Pantheon Monument Observation, Fang Xingjian changed his Waves into the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers.

Therefore, Fang Xingjian's attributes had now become:

Name Fang Xingjian

Age 17

Occupation Windshadow Sword Divinity

Level 19

Strength 73+5

Agility 182+5

Reaction 77

Endurance 47

Flexibility 49

Ether Synchronization Rate 10%

The attributes above come into effect once the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves is activated.

Due to Perfect Muscles, +5 in strength and agility (10% of the endurance attribute).

Skills / Techniques: Rebirth Sword Technique,

New Nine-Headed Dragon Sword Technique,

Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash,

Level 3 Ether Divine Art

Specialties: Genius Swordsmanship,

Elementary Survival Instinct,

Internal Healing,

Internal Training,

Sword Specialist,
High Agility Motion Vision,
Heightened Reflexes,
Perfect Muscles,
Elementary Berserkness,
Level 1 Unparalleled Sword Intent
Waves Level 1 Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves
Mental Cultivation Method Level 5 Universal Sword Dominance
Lunisolar

Other than strength, his other attributes had all reduced because of the change to his Waves. However, this was all temporary. As long as he could reach level 3 in the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves, he would be able to surpass the stats he gained from the Sonido Sword Zephyr Waves completely. In the future, the gap between the two would get continuously greater, and they would not be able to be placed at the same level.

After the twelve hours was up, Fang Xingjian, raised his head and looked over to discover that the number of people, who had attained breakthroughs in comprehending the Pantheon Monument, had increased.

Hoult had already attained a breakthrough to the fifth level. However, his eyes were shut tightly. He could only feel that a tremendous barrier was blocking right in front of him, causing him to be unable to attain a further breakthrough.

‘Why? Why is it that I sense something seems to be missing in the inscriptions on the Pantheon Monument? What is missing? It’s causing me to be unable to continue my comprehension.’

Anderson’s face had turned extremely dark. He had managed to break through to the third level, which was already considered quite a feat, but he was still far from Hoult’s level 5, let alone Fang

Xingjian's level 7.

Moreover, aside from Anderson, Wei Leng had also attained a breakthrough to the third level.

Satisfaction appeared on Rota's face. Like Manny, she had also attained the second level.

Manny did not think too much about the Pantheon Monument, but rather, focused more on that hint of inspiration the Melancholic Monarch had given to him in regards to the Pantheon Monument. After all, it seemed that reaching the second level was sufficient to bring him into the top sixteen, allowing him to join the arena battle in the next round.

Moreover, compared to the Pantheon Monument, he was more concerned over when he would be able to attain Heaven's Perception.

David's countenance turned pale white as he hid behind the crowd, as though he did not dare to meet Fang Xingjian's eyes. After having gone through the three stages, Fang Xingjian's performance was increasingly terrifying. In his heart, David had totally extinguished any thoughts of fighting against Fang Xingjian. He just wanted to stay far away from Fang Xingjian and no longer dared to go against him.

Having been put through such a blow, humiliated, seen as a joke, and then had his lofty ambitions extinguished completely by Fang Xingjian, it would be hard for David to get any progress in his whole life now.

Just as everyone was planning to head out, the old man stood right in front of Fang Xingjian and said, "Hey, you're really not going to consider to be my disciple? Do you know how many disciples I've taken in in this lifetime? How many top notch experts I've taught? You definitely won't lose out if you were to become my disciple. Not only would you be able to feel free to look at and learn any Killing technique in the academy, I'll also provide

with various heavenly and earthly treasures as well as ferocious beasts. You really won't consider this?"

...

It was already nighttime outside the hall. However, there were still a few hundred spectators waiting there. Standing before them were the four examiners.

Governor Devitt smiled and said, "What do you guys think the results for this year's Pantheon Monument Observation will be like?"

"There are too many geniuses in this year. The results would naturally surpass that of past years," Old man Luke said. "However, the first place should still be either Hoult or Fang Xingjian?"

Yaris said, "And Anderson. Don't forget about this lad just because Hoult and Fang Xingjian had exemplary performances in the previous rounds. He's able to transition into the Shadow Death God which no one has been able to do for the past two hundred years. There are definitely areas about him which are outstanding. His talent is definitely not lower than that of Hoult or Fang Xingjian, it's just that he does not have as much experience as the two of them.

"And this stage tests one on their talent, he still has a great chance."

Armstrong, whose face was covered with scars, said, "There's also Wei Leng. Don't forget about him either. His experience is truly weaker compared to the other three. Despite this, he was able to have a breakthrough to attain Heaven's Perception. This is a good demonstration of his talent.

"Especially with the fact that he holds a deep-seated hatred and is extremely suppressed... The more suppressed one is, the stronger the rebound will be. Once he explodes, the earth will tremble, and

the mountains will quake. He'll likely be able to soar up."

Amidst the spectators, there were also people discussing the potential outcome of this stage.

"I think well of Fang Xingjian. His performance for the past two rounds are too dazzling. His abilities are not on the same level as the other Knights."

"So what if he's strong? The Pantheon Monument Observation stage tests them on their talent. The fact that Fang Xingjian is strong now does not mean that his talent is the best.

"In terms of talent, Anderson still surpasses him. At the very least, there have been people who succeeded in transitioning into a Windstorm Sword Hero, but no one has succeeded in becoming a Shadow Death God for the past two hundred years. His talent is probably higher than that of Fang Xingjian's."

"It's useless to just have talent too. I think well of Hoult. Inheritance of a Divine level expert's legacy is definitely no trivial issue. His experience is definitely the highest amongst the few of them. I know for a fact that the Pantheon Monument depends not only on talent but also a sturdy foundation.

"Moreover, how could Hoult, having inherited a Divine level expert's legacy, possibly lose out in terms of talent?"

Just as everyone were disputing, chatting, and exchanging their views, the door to the hall opened.

Chapter 228 Compare (Part I)

Seeing the door open, Devitt smiled and said, “Alright, as per the regulations, you guys can take turns showing us your results, starting from the one with the most comprehended to the one with the least.”

Things were arranged this way to allow the examiners to compare and judge the students’ degrees of comprehension more easily.

In the hall, everyone turned their gazes to Fang Xingjian. By right, he should be the first one to go out.

However, the old man waved his hand and said, “It’s fine. The rest of you can go first. Let me talk to this lad.” He looked toward Fang Xingjian with a burning gaze and said, “You’re really not going to consider it? Let me tell you, I have a set of Killing technique that allows one to become four people, easily increasing the practitioner’s battle prowess by four times.”

Hoult and the others smiled helplessly. Eventually, Hoult was the first one to step out.

Amidst everyone’s gazes, Hoult was the first to appear. This represented that he had attained the highest level of comprehension this time around. Everyone took this as the natural and logical order of things.

Having inherited the teachings of a Divine level expert, there was no doubt of his talent.

Devitt also smiled as he watched Hoult in anticipation, saying, “Great, Hoult, you have not disappointed me. Quick, show us how many levels of the mysteries you have comprehended.”

Hoult’s countenance was a bit off, but he did not say anything. He merely nodded, his thoughts twitching slightly, and spots of light appeared all over his body and four circles of light appeared

on his back.

As the many circles of light appeared on his back, everyone's expression turned from mild surprise to utter astonishment.

“Four circles of light? Doesn't that mean he has comprehended five levels of the mysteries?”

“He attained a breakthrough to the fifth level of the Pantheon Monument's mysteries? God, the highest record was Governor Devitt's fourth level, right? To think that he has reached the fifth level?”

“Hoult is truly favored by the gods. This is amazing, too amazing...”

A commotion broke out amongst the crowd.

Looking at this scene, a hint of delight flashed past Devitt's face. He smiled and said, “Excellent, excellent, excellent. The Heavens has shown its blessing on Sinkoda. To think that after I had attained a breakthrough to the fourth level, there would be someone who would reach the fifth level, breaking the record once again.”

He looked at Hoult, full of admiration, and said, “Hoult, you really have not let me down. Your talent is so great, it leaves one speechless. Amongst all the geniuses in the world, you're already considered one of the best. How is it? Is the fifth level the last one?” He looked at Hoult with a face full of curiosity and agitation.

Hearing his words, the other three examiners also nodded as they looked at Hoult in admiration. It was as if they were looking at an unrivalled piece of raw jade, hoping to take him under their wings and carefully polish him so that he could exude a brilliant dazzle in the future.

They had initially thought that, with so many geniuses stimulating and competing with each other in this year's Regional Selection, there might be people who would be able to attain

further breakthroughs under the pressure. However, they had thought that it would be amazing enough to be able to match Governor Devitt's fourth level. How could they have possibly known that there would be people who could reach the fifth level? It was simply miraculous.

However, thinking about how he was the grand disciple of the Astral Ancestor, they shook their heads in pity.

‘It’s a pity... If only he didn’t have a Master...’

Hearing that and thinking of Fang Xingjian who had yet to come out, Hoult smiled bitterly and shook his head, “Lord Devitt, you’re too generous with your praises. However, there are still mysteries after the fifth level... I, myself, was not able to comprehend them.”

“These praises are all well deserved.” Devitt thought that he was acting humble as he waved his hand, saying, “You’ve done well to be able to reach the fifth level. There will probably be no one capable of surpassing you in a long time. You’re truly deserving of the first place in this stage.”

Hoult’s expression was awkward, but he did not say anything. He merely smiled bitterly and shook his head.

A large group of young girls cheered from the crowd, shooting burning gazes as if they wanted to roast Hoult.

“Young master Hoult is the best!”

“That’s of course! Otherwise, how could he have been accepted under the wing of a Divine level expert? His talent is definitely the best in this year’s Regional Selection.”

“Fifth level? This has broken Lord Devitt’s previous record! It’s a new record! And how old was Lord Devitt back then? He was almost forty! How old is Hoult now?”

These girls were all young, aristocratic ladies who adored Hoult. They were now cheering loudly, as if there was no one around them, causing great dissatisfaction to the people around them.

However, they did not care about this. It was as if their eyes were filled with nothing but Hoult. No one noticed that Hoult appeared to be slightly awkward.

Devitt frowned, but continued to ask, “Since you’ve already comprehended the fifth level, Hoult, let me ask you... Are you willing to share your explication with us? We will exchange the information with something of an equivalent value.”

Toward this, Hoult had long thought of the perfect reply. He shook his head and said, “I’m sorry. This method concerns my master’s and grandmaster’s martial arts secrets. I can’t share it.”

All of the spectators outside the hall had expressions of shock and envy as they looked at the four circles of light behind Hoult.

Tresia’s Xiu Yi sighed, “To think that he has comprehended the fifth level of the Pantheon Monument’s mysteries. To be accepted under the wing of a Divine level expert, this Hoult is truly a genius blessed by the heavens. This has become the highest record in the past two hundred years.”

Next to him, his younger martial brother, Zhou Yong, also said, “Seems like Hoult is the one with the greatest rewards from the Pantheon Monument. Fifth level of the Pantheon Monument... just how talented is he?”

Kirst’s City Lord also sighed and shook his head. “Amazing, really amazing. Back then, I was already seen as a genius for comprehending the second level. Now, compared to Hoult, the difference is truly enormous.

“I wonder what level Xingjian was able to comprehend. With his talent, the third level should not be a problem. I’m just curious if he was able to reach the fourth level. It’s a pity, truly a pity... If Xingjian had inherited the legacy of a Divine level expert as well, he would probably be able to catch up to Hoult.”

When he said this, a young, golden-haired aristocrat lady looked

over and said to Kirst's City Lord with a displeased expression, "Aren't you thinking too highly of Fang Xingjian? How can he compare to our Hoult?"

She then looked at Hoult adoringly and said, "Hoult is the grand disciple of a Divine level expert, comes from a distinguished background, and has a strong foundation. The difference between his talent and Fang Xingjian's is practically the distance of ten streets! What right do you guys have to compare our Hoult with Fang Xingjian?"

"Do you know how much hard work Hoult puts in? Do you know how difficult it is for him?"

Kirst's City Lord frowned and said, "You're Hoult's kin?"

"How could I possibly be Young Master Hoult's kin?" The young lady continued, "As long as he can cast a glance in my direction later, I'll be satisfied."

Lilia immediately turned and glared at the golden-haired young aristocrat lady, but Kirst's City Lord stopped her and shook his head. He could not be bothered with that young aristocrat lady. He knew that it was useless to say anything to die-hard fans like her.

When the audience heard Hoult mention that he had used the Astral Ancestor's legacy to attain a breakthrough to the fifth level, a hint of understanding and acceptance flashed in their eyes.

Chapter 229 Compare (Part II)

“Using the means of a Divine level expert to solve that of another Divine level expert, it’s no wonder that Hoult was able to reach the fifth level.”

“It’s not a surprise that Hoult is first this time around. After all, he has strong support behind him.”

In the front, hearing Hoult’s words, disappointment flashed past Devitt’s face. “Since it concerns the Astral Ancestor’s martial secrets, it’s not something we can probe into.” He turned toward the door and said, “Who’s next?”

Anderson walked out. When he saw Governor Devitt’s face filled with expectation, he pouted and walked up, directly revealing two circles of light.

With Hoult’s the stimulation from earlier, the crowd was calmer toward Anderson’s performance. However, they were still jealous of his achievements.

Devitt nodded in satisfaction. Although Anderson did not perform as well as Hoult, Hoult was the grand disciple of a Divine level expert. It was understandable for his results to be a bit lower than Hoult’s. His performance was commendable as it was.

“Good, good, good. You’ve comprehended the third level of the mysteries. This performance is already only seen once in ten years. This is really good.”

The young, golden-haired lady next to Lilia sneered, saying, “Fang Xingjian can’t even compare to Anderson and you want to compare him with Hoult? You really don’t know any better.”

Lilia was so angry that her face had flushed crimson. However, the facts were placed right before her and gave her nothing to say.

After Anderson came down, Wei Leng went up next, revealing a first circle of light, then a second one, showing that he had reached

the third level.

“Hahahaha.” Devitt laughed out and said, “We aren’t going to lack in successors for our Great Western Region. This year, you guys are truly great talents, outshining each other. However, since both you and Anderson have reached the third level, the two of you can tie for second place.”

After all, the rankings in this stage did not affect the final rankings. The ranking for the top ten of the Regional Selection was to be decided by the arena battle in the final stage. Therefore, no one had any objections.

“Fang Xingjian should be next?”

“Didn’t you hear? The examinees were told to come out in terms of the levels they had reached. The later they come out, the lower the level.”

Tresia’s Xiu Yi stood amongst the crowd, looking at the door’s direction in jest, “Hmph, Windstorm Sword Hero? In the end, you can’t even be compared to the other three, despite having attained Heaven’s Perception...”

Before he finished his words, Manny walked out from the doors, revealing two circles of light.

Devitt praised Manny, but he still could not stop his brows from furrowing together.

The reason was very simple. Since Manny came out before Fang Xingjian, did that not mean that Fang Xingjian, whom was thought well of by many of them, was not only surpassed by the three seeds, Hoult, Anderson, and Wei Leng, but also Manny?

Following, Rota and the others took their turns to come out and receive Devitt’s commendations. Seeing that so many of them had comprehended the martial arts on the Pantheon Monument, Devitt’s smile was dazzling. However, he still let out a sigh in his heart.

It was because even though people who had only reached the first level had come out, Fang Xingjian was still inside. Did that not mean that Fang Xingjian was below them?

Finally, another Knight walked out from the door. It was an examinee who had not managed to comprehend even the first level of the Pantheon Monument. Under the gaze of the four examiners, he started to blurt out his explication as well as the things he had thought of, hoping to let the examiners rate him through those.

Devitt shook his head and said, “There’s no need to feel dejected. In the previous selections, many Knights had not managed to breakthrough to the first level. You just need to share with us your explications and what you have gained from it. We’ll judge and grade you from there.”

With that, the crowd burst into an uproar as people started to whisper amongst themselves.

“Haha, to think that this Fang Xingjian did not even manage to comprehend the first level?”

“Doesn’t that sound impossible? With his talent and attainment of Heaven’s Perception, this doesn’t sound right...”

“What’s so impossible about that? Didn’t you hear what the Governor said? The examinees are coming out in turns based on the levels they comprehended. The fact that Fang Xingjian has yet to come out shows that he has not even managed to comprehend the first level. I think he’s probably too embarrassed to come out now.”

“But even if that’s really the case, no blind person has ever managed to reach the third stage of the selection in history. It could be that without one’s sight, it might be impossible to perceive certain information on the Pantheon Monument.”

“That’s why I say a blind man is but a blind man. No matter how strong his battle abilities or how great his talent, it’s useless. He

might just be eliminated in this stage.”

At the back of the crowd, Tresia's Xiu Yi broke out into a loud laugh. As he did so, he suddenly grabbed his stomach and waved his hand at Zhou Yong.

“This is funny, too funny...

“Hahahaha, Fang Xingjian, to think that we put you in such high regard. In the end, you may just be eliminated...” Xiu Yi could not help but waved his hand at Zhou Yong, “We've really been worrying for nothing. This person is but a joke.”

Zhou Yong also could not help but shake his head, as if he had not expected things to turn out in such a ridiculous way. To think that Fang Xingjian had not even comprehended a single level.

On the other side, the young, golden-haired aristocrat lady casted a glance at Lilia jestingly, breaking out in laughter, “Some people insist on being put in the ranks of geniuses. In the end, just the Pantheon Monument alone managed to test out the truth. Him attaining the Heaven's Perception might be fake too.”

When Lilia, Ferdinand and the others heard what the young lady said, they felt aggrieved, but could not think of a rebuttal. At the same time, they refused to believe that Fang Xingjian had not even managed to comprehend the first level of the Pantheon Monument's mysteries. They could not help but feel worried that something bad had befallen Fang Xingjian.

After Devitt and the other examiners graded a few other Knights, Fang Xingjian finally shook off the old man and walked out.

Seeing Fang Xingjian finally coming out, many of the spectators smiled as if they waiting to see him make a fool of himself. To think that a genius was unable to match up against other Knights. Many of the spectators loved watching such a spectacle, where someone who was already down was given an additional kick.

Examiner Luke, face covered in wrinkles, also shook his head.

However, he was still suspicious of whether or not there had been some sort of mix-up. He asked, “Fang Xingjian? Why are you queued so far at the back? Was there a problem? Forget that...

“Have you reached the fourth level?” Since Hoult had only managed to reach the fifth level after inheriting the legacy of a Divine level expert, he did not have the wishful thinking that Fang Xingjian would be able to do the same.

Seeing Fang Xingjian shake his head, Luke could not hold back his disappointment as he continued to ask, “Then, was it the third level?”

Fang Xingjian continued to shake his head.

Booing sounds came from the crowd.

Fang Xingjian seemed to be able to tell what the spectators were thinking, but he knew that there was nothing for him to explain. He just needed to demonstrate it and they would shut up.

Therefore, he walked straight to the middle and said calmly, “Let me demonstrate it.”

Amidst the spectators’ gazes filled with ridicule, pity and sarcasm, spots of light started flashing from Fang Xingjian’s body.

Chapter 230 Compare (Part III)

Fang Xingjian did not reply, but allowed his thoughts to circulate as he thought of the many star charts and star trails. Many spots of light started flashing all over his body.

From there, the first circle of light, the second circle of light, the third circle of light, the fourth circle of light, the fifth circle of light, and the sixth circle of light lit up one by one.

When the third circle of light lit up, everyone was wide-eyed and open-mouthed. When the fourth, the fifth and even the sixth circle of light lit up, the place was filled with absolute silence, as if they had all been turned into mutes.

Lilia was the first one to react. She smiled, turned to the golden-haired, young aristocrat lady who appeared as if she had been turned into stone, and asked, “Haha, which level did Hoult reached again? I think it was the fifth?”

That young lady’s face immediately turned black, but this time around, there was nothing she could say to rebut. She could only grit her teeth, feeling very stuffy.

To think that Fang Xingjian was able to reach the seventh level from the Pantheon Monument. This news was simply too unbelievable and too astonishing.

If someone had told this to Governor Devitt, he would definitely have laughed, and would neither have taken it seriously nor have believed it.

However, the facts were placed right before him and he was forced to believe it. He even saw that the old man who had been guarding the monument was following behind Fang Xingjian.

He asked in astonishment, “Why have you come out as well?”

The old man broke into a grin, revealing his incomplete set of yellowed teeth, and said, “I’m not going to guard the Pantheon

Monument anymore. You can look for someone else.” He turned and looked at Fang Xingjian, saying in enthusiasm, “I have an affinity with this young lad. I want to have a good chat with him.”

Devitt did not continue to speak to the old man, but turned to look at Fang Xingjian excitedly and asked, “Xingjian, you solved all the mysteries behind the Pantheon Monument?” Looking at the six circles of light on Fang Xingjian’s back, he still did not dare to believe it.

The old man grinned and said, “Little De, even you find it hard to believe, right? But it’s the truth, this lad solved the final level of the Pantheon Monument’s mysteries, the seventh level. Even the Melancholic Monarch himself appeared.”

“What?!”

Instantly, all four examiners dashed up, looking at Fang Xingjian as if they were looking at a national treasure, their gazes so scorchingly hot that it seemed as if they would be able to burn through his body.

Devitt grabbed Fang Xingjian and asked, “Xingjian, have you really solved all the mysteries behind the Pantheon Monument? You’ve reached the seventh level?

“Then you must have received the main legacy that was left behind by the Melancholic Monarch! What is it? Killing technique? Nurturing technique? Waves? Or is it a mental cultivation method?”

Although Devitt was slightly agitated, he regained his composure after finishing his words.

In fact, if it were something else, even if he was given a Divine Remains Equipment, he would not be this excited.

However, the Melancholic Monarch’s main legacy... How astonishing was this? Even amongst the Divine level experts from two hundred years ago, the Melancholic Monarch’s powers had

always been at the top.

Now, Devitt was looking at Fang Xingjian like he was a treasure. However, after asking his questions, he had once again regained his composure. He looked at Fang Xingjian and said, “Xingjian, you don’t have to be in a rush to say it. We have regulations in both the academy and in the Regional Selection that the martial arts cultivated by the Knights can all be kept a secret. It’s not compulsory for you to share everything with us. The same goes for what you have comprehended from the Pantheon Monument.

“However, if you’re willing to reveal, we won’t be taking it for free either. Any Knight who is willing to announce the results of their comprehension from the Pantheon Monument will all receive great compensation.

“You don’t have to be in a hurry to make the decision. After all, you’ll still be remaining in the academy in the end. You can take your time to consider this.”

What Devitt was thinking of was that after Fang Xingjian had become a Conferred Knight, he would remain in his Regional Academy to continue his studies. Usually, Knights in Regional Academies would mostly choose to remain at their academy to continue their cultivation until they had met a bottleneck.

Then, they would be presented with two options. The first one was to continue to stay in the academy to continue to pursue advanced studies and the mysteries behind ether particles. This was a path where one researched cultivation.

The second option was that after one reached the bottleneck, the person could leave the academy. The Empire would naturally help arrange a good position outside, which was not limited to positions in the Ministry of Finance, in the army, in the Royal Weaponry, or in the Royal Knight Association. It could also be the position of an academy’s Headmaster, a City Lord, or a Marshal of the Imperial Guards who was tasked with the job of leading regional troops.

They were all great positions.

Of course, after leaving the Regional Academy, they would not be able to return to continue their studies. The only exception was passing the National Selection, which would allow them to continue cultivating in the Empire's National Academy located in the Imperial Capital.

No matter how talented Fang Xingjian was, the ten Heavenly Barriers Conferred Knights had to face were extremely tough. Devitt thought to himself that no matter how fast Fang Xingjian was, he would still need to stay in the academy for a number of years. Devitt would thus have lots of time to employ sugar-coated bullets to coax the secrets of the Pantheon Monument out from Fang Xingjian.

The spectators at the back were all stunned. The seventh level of the Pantheon Monument, to solve all of the mysteries behind the Pantheon Monument... What kind of concept was this? It was something that had not been accomplished for the past two hundred years, but now, it was accomplished by a seventeen year old young man.

The four examiners who had been extremely solemn and strict all this time were now surrounding Fang Xingjian. Their expressions, their actions, were all simply as if they were looking at their own kids.

Amidst the crowd, Tresia's Xiu Yi frowned as horror filled his eyes, "Impossible! Impossible! No one has been able to solve the final mysteries behind the Pantheon Monument! How could Fang Xingjian have done it? Have I heard incorrectly? My eyes must have been playing tricks on me... I must have heard wrong..."

However, the six circles of light on Fang Xingjian's back were still flashing in his mind.

He felt that it was the first time that his life had become like an illusion, as if he was witnessing a legend.

Amidst everyone's extremely astonished gazes, Devitt and the other three examiners returned to their original positions. They had exchanged words with the old man who guarded the Pantheon Monument and understood Fang Xingjian's situation.

Devitt was beaming, seeming very satisfied with this year's results. He smiled and said, "The results of this selection's Pantheon Monument Observation have far surpassed that of previous years. A total of thirteen examinees had results in comprehending the Pantheon Monument's mysteries. Out of them, there were three who comprehended the second level, two who comprehended the third level, and one who comprehended the fifth level..."

He then finally went on to announce the most shocking news, "... But what I'm happiest to hear is that our Great Western Region Regional Academy's Pantheon Monument has finally been fully solved. The seventh level has been comprehended, something which no one has ever succeeded in before.

"Fang Xingjian. He has solved all seven levels of the Pantheon Monument's mysteries and has comprehended the Melancholic Monarch's greatest legacy. Therefore, I'm pleased to announce that the one to be placed in first position in the Pantheon Monument Observation is Fang Xingjian."

In that instant, everyone broke out in applause. Lilia, Ferdinand, Anthony, and Robert all clapped furiously, their palms turning red.

Xiu Yi and Zhou Yong looked at this scene in disbelief, feeling as if they were still in a dream.

The young ladies who had been cheering for Hoult were all rendered speechless, as if someone was grabbing their necks.

The other rankings were based on the level the individuals had comprehended. Those who had comprehended the same level would be further distinguished by the time they took to

comprehend. If the amount of time they took was the same as well, then it would be based on the prowess of the martial arts they had comprehended.

In the third stage, sixteen examinees would be selected. Other than the twelve who had comprehended the Pantheon Monument's mysteries, the remaining examinees would have to verbalize what they had comprehended, and demonstrate the little martial arts they had gained. They would then be assessed.

There were people who had tried to put on an act, people who had spouted rubbish, as well as people who had some truth in what they spoke and were not far from attaining a breakthrough in their comprehensions.

These people were naturally all assessed. However, there were not many spectators who had their attention on them. Everyone's focus was now on Fang Xingjian. At this moment, he was the one and only leading character.

After the sixteen examinees were selected, everyone cheered.

The sixteen examinees were Fang Xingjian in first place, Hoult in second, Wei Leng in third, Anderson in fourth...

As for David, he was obviously eliminated.

After all the rankings were completed, the sixteen examinees were led to the dining hall for their meals. After finishing their meals, these people who were all talents blessed by the heaven and were only one step away from becoming Conferred Knights would then have a private discussion with the examiners before starting their respective preparations for the final stage, the arena battle.

And although the rankings in the third stage had no impact on the results of the arena battle, they had a great impact on the bets placed by those from Kirst. At least on this night, Ferdinand, who had placed his bets that Fang Xingjian would come out first place for the third stage, had went to sleep in smiles.

Chapter 231 Chat

The night before the arena battle, all sixteen examinees would be individually called up by the examiners for a chat.

After all, even if only ten of the sixteen became Conferred Knights this time, the remaining six would probably still be able to become Conferred Knights on their next try.

It was very likely that these sixteen would become the country's pillars in the future. Of course the examiners would have to interview them properly, verifying their mental states, thoughts, and characters.

Although it would be hard for them to tell much from this talk, it was something they could not skip, despite the limited effects. It was just like how all public servants in modern days were required to go through an interview. Before one became a Conferred Knight, he would have to be called up for a talk with the examiners.

As the examinee who had consecutively placed first in the three stages, Fang Xingjian was the first one to enter.

On entering, he saw that all four examiners were quietly seated behind a long table and a chair had been placed before him. It was similar to the setup of a modern interview.

Seeing that Fang Xingjian had taken his seat, Governor Devitt smiled and said, "No need to be nervous, we'll just be having a casual chat. The contents of our discussion will neither be recorded nor will they affect your results for this Regional Selection. Therefore, you can feel free to talk."

Seeing Fang Xingjian nod, Yaris, with great interest, was the first to start, "Then let me go first. Xingjian, to be honest, your talent is really high and you have a high chance of becoming a Divine level. Therefore, I'd like to know, what goals do you have for the future?"

Is it to pursue the mysteries behind the ether particles?

“To run the country? To create world peace? To command an army? To pioneer the expansion of our territories? To become a grandmaster of the generation, having pupils everywhere? Or what other goals do you have?”

Hearing this, Fang Xingjian was stunned for a moment. He had not expected this question to be asked. However, after thinking for a short moment, he directly said, “I actually don’t have much ambitions. In the past, the only thing I wanted to do was to spend my life pursuing the highest level in sword arts.

“But I realized, that to pursue the greatest level in sword arts, it’s not enough to proceed with determination. It also requires one to create a calm and quiet environment that would allow one to pursue this goal.” With that, he paused. He once again thought of Li Shuanghua, Caroline, and the First Prince, causing strong killing intent to flash in his eyes.

“Therefore, on my path to pursue martial arts, I’ll kill all those who stand in my way and create disturbances in my mental state.”

The four examiners exchanged a glance, their gazes reflecting that they had expected this. They had investigated Fang Xingjian’s records long ago and were very clear about his situation.

He belonged to the type of people who would focus on cultivating by himself as long as other people did not appear before him to create disturbances. If a person like him was given sufficient space and resources, he would be easier to control than those who wanted to create a revolution in the country, to expand the country’s territories, and to build up the reputation of their clan.

Moreover, with their magnanimity, how could they not be able to accept Fang Xingjian’s small bit of rashness? Killing some beasts who had committed evil acts and had gotten on one’s nerves was not considered a big issue.

Fang Xingjian knew that they must have investigated him before and he himself had not cared to lie on such issues. If he did not even dare to speak his mind, how would he be able to proceed on and advance on the path of a Knight without any obstructions?

Of course, it would be impossible for the details of the situation to be verified from just a talk with these four. They would still have to take time to slowly observe and understand in the future.

Luke, who appeared to be extremely old, spoke with a quivering voice, “What do you think of the current status where Knights are able to deal with commoners as they wish, where the government is unable to deal with them, and where they can only be punished by the association?”

Fang Xingjian’s narrowed his eyes. After some thought, he understood the rationale behind this question. Governor Devitt was on the Second Prince’s side, and considering how the other three examiners were all under the Governor, they naturally fell under the Second Prince’s wing.

If First Prince represented the traditional powers in the entire Empire, then the Second Prince could be said to be the revolutionary party which wanted to overthrow the tradition of having the first son inherit the throne and wanted to change the strict system where those in power could freely bully those of a lower level.

There were clearly hidden connotations in this question, and they were questioning Fang Xingjian’s political inclinations.

To this question, Fang Xingjian had no problems either. There was no way to relieve the tension between himself and the First Prince, and his thoughts had always been closer to that of the Second Prince’s to begin with. Therefore, he replied directly, “This is the root of all chaos.

“The commoners are what forms the basis of the Empire. Every year, there would be a large number of Knights being born from

amongst the commoners.

“Freely killing and pushing down the commoners would only sow seeds of vengeance and conflict. If this were to go on, one day, the feelings of conflict would explode.”

Luke continued to ask, “Then do you think that Knights should be given a status equivalent to commoners?”

“That isn’t the case either.” Fang Xingjian said. “A Knight’s status should clearly be higher than a commoner’s. Since both parties have differences in powers, if they were forced to be put on the same level, it would be like putting dragons among snakes. Just in terms of a Knight’s required food intake, level of activity, as well as strength, there is already a huge difference. If both parties were to be governed together under the same set of rules, it would only cause chaos in the country.

“But the superiority that Knights enjoy should not be built upon brutality to the commoners. It should, instead, be reflected through the benefits provided by Knights.

“Acts allowing Knights to freely kill commoners are merely acts of evil and would lead to the destruction of the country’s foundations. It should not be advocated.”

Luke nodded in satisfaction and asked, “Then will you never kill commoners?”

“I’ll definitely kill those who deserve to be killed. Commoners are not beasts, but neither are they treasures that should be carefully treated with great delicacy. Providing them with excessive protection will only cause them to become overly complacent, thinking that they are really able to control everything.” Fang Xingjian said calmly, “There’s a saying which goes like this: ‘If we get too close, they would become insolent. If we stay too far, they would feel aggrieved.’

We can neither become too close to them nor should we be too

cruel to them. The way it should be done is to keep an appropriate distance between Knights and commoners.

Luke nodded, thinking to himself, 'Although his take is still too immature, judging from his stand, he's still someone we can consider taking in.'

'And that saying he mentioned...'If we get too close, they would become insolent. If we stay too far, they would feel aggrieved'... This line has a lingering charm to it.'

Governor Devitt smiled and said, "It's my turn next. Xingjian, amongst the remaining sixteen people left in this Regional Selection, who do you think is the strongest?"

Fang Xingjian answered as if it went without saying, "It's obviously me."

When Fang Xingjian said this, his expression was very calm, his heartbeat was very normal. He was neither proud nor arrogant, appearing to be just stating facts.

Devitt revealed an interested expression and asked, "Then if you have to spar, who would you like to fight against?"

Fang Xingjian gave it some thought and replied, "If it's amongst these sixteen people, I don't really have much interest in them." He 'looked' toward the four examiners and said, "But if it's the four of you, I do have great interest."

All four examiners smiled. Devitt shook his head and said, "If you wish to spar with us, then you better wait until your ether synchronization rate has reached 50%. Ether synchronization rate is not simply just about skill synthesis."

Hoult was, of course, the next to be interviewed. However, since he was a representative for a Divine level expert, Devitt and the others let him pass after just a few questions.

They showed greater interest when the third person, Anderson, came in.

Devitt asked, “Amongst all sixteen examinees, who do you think is the strongest?”

“It should be Fang Xingjian? Or maybe Hoult. Hoult as a level 29 Superior Divine Weapon, so he should still be able to be a match for Fang Xingjian.” Although Anderson, who had transitioned into a Shadow Death God, appeared unwilling, he still mentioned Fang Xingjian’s name. However, he immediately added on, “But it’s only for now. After I’ve completed the second transition, within three years, I’ll definitely surpass him.”

Devitt smiled, neither consenting nor dissenting, and asked, “Then what do you think your final rank will be?”

“It should be either second or third place.” Anderson was very short, and his feet did not touch the ground when he was seated on the chair. He dangled his feet and said, “If Fang Xingjian is first, I still have a chance to win against Hoult. However, if Hoult turns out to be first and I have to fight against Fang Xingjian, my chances of winning are low since he is too fast and I don’t have a level 29 Divine Weapon.

“When dealing with people like Fang Xingjian, if you can’t fight against him, there’s no need to think of escaping. Before him, a loss would mean death.”

He then shrugged and continued, “Therefore, it all depends on my luck in the lots drawing for the arena battle.”

Just like that, everyone went through the interview and either went back to rest or continued their cultivation. They then welcomed the last and final stage of the Regional Selection, the arena battle.

Chapter 232 Arena (Part I)

The final stage of the Regional Selection, the arena battle, had finally started. The location this stage was held at was completely different from that of the previous three stages.

The arena was placed in a huge battle coliseum. The rules for this stage were very simple. Those who acknowledged their loss, lost the ability to battle, or stepped out of the arena, would be considered as the losers.

After all, it was a battle between level 19 Knights. Therefore, the occurrence of injuries or deaths were possible. Those who died in battle would be eliminated, and those who killed—naturally, they would not be penalized.

Therefore, it was possible to kill in the arena battle. This made the spectators even more thrilled and excited.

At this moment, the battle coliseum stands were filled with up to a thousand people. The coliseum was drowned in commotion as the spectators engaged in discussions over the arena battle.

The discussions about who would clinch the top two positions were the most heated up.

After all, even though Fang Xingjian had shown an overwhelming advantage in his talent in the third stage, talent and battle prowess were two different things.

Of course, Fang Xingjian had also shown unrivalled speed in the second stage, but Hoult had also demonstrated the great prowess of his level 29 Divine Weapon. Just the high temperatures, which encompassed a radius of tens or hundreds of meters, would make it hard for Fang Xingjian to get close.

“I wonder which ten people will advance and succeed in becoming Conferred Knights. Conferred Knights... Once they succeed, they’ll soar up, and even their statuses will become very

different,” Kirst’s City Lord said.

Ferdinand broke the situation up and analyzed, “The contenders for the top two positions are, naturally, Xingjian and Hoult. Although Xingjian is very powerful, Hoult has a level 29 Superior Divine Weapon, Crimson Fire. Once it transforms into a fire dragon to protect Hoult, there’s no way to get near him at all.

“As for the third and fourth place, they should be Anderson and Wei Leng. As for the rest, I can’t tell. City Lord, are you able to guess them?”

“It’s tough,” Kirst’s City Lord said. “They are all top notch Knights in the first transition. Regardless of whether it’s their attributes, Killing techniques, Waves or mental cultivation methods, they are all matched very closely. And in that instant of their battles, there will be various wonderful and dazzling thoughts, through which it will be hard to differentiate between what’s reality and what’s fantasy. How they will control their powers and attack is something that even I can’t be 100% sure of.

“This is why the results of the battles are so unpredictable.”

Ferdinand started to pray in his heart. He had thrown in a tremendous sum of money, betting Fang Xingjian would come out first.

At the same time, 16 examinees headed up the arena, preparing to draw lots.

In a corner of the stands, Tresia’s Xiu Yi lowered his head, looking at the black-robed man next to him respectfully.

That man was encompassed in a layer of black robes, revealing only a pair of cold eyes as he looked toward the arena. He was exuding a strong, terrifying aura which kept all living things away.

“Lord Adri,” Xiu Yi pointed to Fang Xingjian and said, “That first guy from the left is Fang Xingjian.”

The black-robed man was the level 25 Conferred Knight Adri, the

younger brother of Tresia Clan's clan head and the Deputy Commander of the Imperial Guards.

Blood vessels appeared in his eyes as he gazed at Fang Xingjian. That brutal gaze was as though he wanted to turn the whole arena into a pile of ash. Adri had contracted an unmentionable disease which prevented him from engaging in sexual activities. Thus, he detested the world and its ways. This was also why he had been a person with extreme views from a young age. Moreover, the only kin he had was his elder brother.

Considering how Kaunitz's location was unknown and it was likely that he had been killed, Adri bore a huge hatred toward Fang Xingjian. He could not help but want to kill Fang Xingjian.

"Hmph, I had already received the news yesterday. I heard that old fogey Devitt holds this Fang Xingjian in high regard. The top genius in Great Western Region?"

"Hehe, but the higher he's pushed up, the harder he will fall. This Fang Xingjian... I'll definitely make him die a horrible death!"

David and his father, Mongul City's City Lord, had also arrived at the battle coliseum's stands. Looking at the dejected David, Mongul City's City Lord said furiously, "Why are you so useless? That Fang Xingjian humiliated you like that, yet you're just putting up with it? You're even planning on giving up taking revenge against him?"

"Father, you haven't seen his performance in the previous three stages," David said dejectedly. "Both his talent and abilities are too strong. He's just like the sky which hangs high above—something which is impossible to catch up with no matter how hard you try."

Naturally, Mongul's City Lord did not believe David's words. Although Mongul's City Lord had heard of Fang Xingjian's results, he had assumed Fang Xingjian was just another great genius. He had seen many of them, but most of them just had great talent. Before they had turned their talent in actual powers, they were all

merely geniuses and not true powerful experts.

Especially after hearing what David had said... What did he mean by 'the sky that hangs high above'? This evaluation was too exaggerated, making it harder for him to believe.

Mongul City's City Lord shook his head and said, "You've really disappointed me. A Knight is just a Knight. Don't you understand the gap between a Knight and a Conferred Knight? While Fang Xingjian's tricks may seem very amazing to you, his quick speed can only make him slightly special amongst the Conferred Knights.

"As for beheading a level 21 ferocious beast, it's nothing special either. All he did was kill a wild beast which knew nothing about martial arts.

"Of course, I'll have to admit that, being able to accomplish these things at level 19, Fang Xingjian's talent is truly astonishing. But it's precisely the reason why you should go all out and eradicate him from the roots.

"If you don't deal with him whilst he is still weak, are you planning to watch as he grows stronger—watch as your humiliation continues to stay with you?"

"But now, he's already being treated like a treasure by the Governor. All the more we can't do anything to him now." David looked at his father's unresigned expression and shook his head. Sighing, he said, "Forget it. Father, you'll know when you see Fang Xingjian's battle."

Everyone had finished drawing their lots and verified who their opponents were.

The whole process was to have all sixteen of them start off by drawing lots and then have eight elimination rounds. The eight winners would be the top eight, while those who lost would have to continue in a round robin tournament, vying for the ninth and tenth positions.

The eight winners from the first round would draw lots once again and compete for the top four positions.

Next, it would be the competition amongst the top four to decide who would be in the finals. The two winners would fight for the top two positions while the losers fought for the third and fourth places.

In the first battle, it was Rota against a middle-aged Knight.

That middle-aged Knight was a military personnel by the name of Howard. Having lived over ten years of his life in the battlefields, he had great experience in battle. His attributes, specialties, and Killing techniques had all been trained to the highest level.

Seeing that Rota was placed to fight against Howard, everyone did not think well of her. It was because Rota was too young, making it hard to believe she would be able to surpass Howard in terms of her attributes, specialties, or skills.

Howard thought the same too. Holding a machete, he jumped up into the arena and looked at Rota, who looked just like a bean sprout. He smiled and said, “Young miss, you should just surrender. Otherwise, it’d be too much of a pity for such a pretty face to get scratched up by me.”

Rota did not say anything. She appeared extremely calm. Even though she knew her abilities were not comparable to his, her heart did not waver in the slightest. Rota held onto her spear, pointing it at a slanted angle to the floor as she looked at Howard calmly.

Howard let out a cold laugh, “Seems like you’re not willing to surrender. Since that’s the case, let me send you off.”

Before he finished speaking, he seemed to turn into a cheetah instantaneously. The muscles in his feet contracted furiously as a strong surge of power exploded under his feet. With a loud bang, he dashed up to Rota, leaving behind a series of afterimages. Then

the machete in his hand slashed out toward Rota's head with the strongest force and the fastest speed.

While Howard had appeared to speak very casually as though he looked down on Rota, when he attacked, he did so with his full power. He had no intention of showing compassion to her just because she was female.

It was how it should be. When it boiled down to the top sixteen in the Regional Selection, which of them would take their opponents lightly or show compassion just because the opponent was female? That would be taking their own lives and futures as jokes.

At the Regional Selection, even if it were the world's most beautiful lady, they would still lash out at them. They would fight whoever stood in their way to the bitter death.

On the contrary, Howard had appeared so flippant in order to confuse Rota, making her feel as though he was taking her lightly. He then attacked with his full power, slashing out explosively and in turn, creating a difference deliberately.

However, Rota seemed prepared for this. Ever since she comprehended the Pantheon Monument, she had stepped into a calm state of mind, as though she would be able to release her soul at any time and attain Heaven's Perception.

At this moment, even when faced with Howard's explosive attack, her peaceful mental state was still undisrupted.

She took three consecutive steps backward and avoided Howard's three slashes, which seemed to be connected as they reflected light. Each of the slashes got closer and closer to Rota's face, and it seemed as though a fourth attack would slash open Rota's stomach.

This was Howard's Killing technique—Tempest Quick Blade. If one were not able to block his consecutive moves, then as the forty-nine consecutive attacks from the Tempest Quick Blade gets

increasingly quicker and stronger, the attacks would eventually become impossible to fend off.

Chapter 233 Arena (Part II)

Just as Howard was about to proceed with his fourth slash, the tip of Rota's spear, which had been stationary for very long, finally thrust out, and the Void Penetrative Divine Spear was activated. This spear attack shot out from the ground and pierced through Howard's foot.

With a stifled grunt, Howard retreated a few steps backward with blood spurting out from his foot.

"How did you do that?" He stared at Rota as he asked. "The Void Penetrative Divine Spear should be unable to strike out from your blind spots."

Although the Void Penetrative Divine Spear was very strong, it did not provide additional attributes and had a weakness in which it could not attack from a spot the user could not see. This meant it could not pierce out from one's body, clothes, guards, or under their opponent's feet.

However, Rota had just done this seemingly impossible thing.

Hearing Howard's question, Rota shook her head and said, "Although you look like you would go all out even when you're fighting against a seemingly weak opponent, you're in fact still looking down on me. Otherwise, you would not have thought of performing the forty-nine slashes from your Tempest Quick Blade right from the start.

"For you to have used the Tempest Quick Blade's consecutive attacks right from the start, means that you never thought I would be able to break through your attacks."

"It's because you've taken me lightly that you were unable to notice something you should have."

After Rota said this, she thrust out her spear again. This time around, Howard went on full defence, but his machete flicked up

slightly, as though it had hit against a formless longspear, creating a loud bang.

He responded immediately, “Your speartip is invisible? You had actually activated the Void Penetrative Divine Spear right from the start, revealing less than an inch of the speartip on the surface. However, you kept it hidden, and thus I did not notice it. You were just waiting for me to step on it myself? And then right before I stepped on it, you activated the Void Penetrative Divine Spear at full powers...?”

“That’s right, although the Void Penetrative Divine Spear cannot be activated in the user’s blind spot, an activated Void Penetrative Divine Spear can still continue to be activated even if it is in the user’s blind spot.”

Recognizing this point, Howard felt great regret. If he had truly viewed Rota as an opponent of the same level and had been on defence right from the start, he might have been able to notice this trick of hers when he saw her taking three steps back.

However, it was now all too late. His foot had been pierced through, and it was hard for him to move. As a result, his chances of winning had plunged.

Furthermore, Rota had comprehended, from the Pantheon Monument, the ability to twist light rays and alter the light rays from astral radiations.

Rota’s longspear trembled, and her small silver spear was akin to a raging dragon. Bringing up powerful and explosive gales, her spear thrust out and lashed Howard from over ten meters away.

However, after blocking a few of Rota’s attacks, Howard activated his Reduced Force Field at full force, pushing back the longspear temporarily while he jumped out of the arena, saying, “I admit my defeat in this round.”

Seeing how Rota was looking at him in astonishment, Howard

said, “You were right. I took you too lightly. Therefore, I’ll not make this mistake again. I’m now treating you as an enemy of the same level, and thus, I will not hope of being lucky enough to still be able to defeat you after my foot has suffered a heavy injury.”

Just like that, the first battle ended at the speed of lightning. Howard’s emotional play, Rota’s ingenious trap, and Howard’s decisiveness... All of these demonstrated a battle of wits and courage between Knights.

On the stands, Adri nodded. “This Howard is decisive and knows when to cut losses. He has some guts. That young lady is crafty but is interesting as well. However, she can only be considered lucky to have come across an opponent she could win against.”

Seeing Howard step down, Rota let out a huge sigh of relief and thought to herself, “I’ve finally succeeded.”

After this victory, Rota entered the top eight. Now, regardless of whether she were to win or lose, she would still pass the Regional Selection.

A few more rounds of the competition followed, with both Anderson and Wei Leng winning their matches with great ease. It was finally Manny’s turn. His opponent was the Astral Ancestor’s grand disciple, Hoult, who was cheered on by the crowd to clinch the position of first place.

In the whole battle coliseum, everyone were looking at Manny as though they were looking at an unlucky fellow. The truth was in fact like that. Who would be more unlucky than Manny, who had picked Hoult as his first opponent? It could only be the person who had Fang Xingjian as his opponent.

Rota frowned and looked to Manny as she said, “You should just give up directly and conserve your energy to vie for the ninth or tenth position.”

Fang Xingjian did not comment.

Manny smiled as well. As though he could feel all the gazes of pity and ridicule, he said, “It’s fine. Xingjian, I’ll go up first and test out his skills for you before I fight for ninth place.”

Hoult was already on the arena. When he saw Manny walking over, Hoult smiled gracefully and said, “You’re very courageous. You can be considered to be a true Knight.”

Manny smiled and shook his head. “In my last Regional Selection, I was defeated by a great genius like you and ended up missing the chance to go for the second transition. I even ended up being dispirited for many years. In this battle, no matter if I win or lose, if I were to cower back again, I can probably forget about going through the second transition for my whole life.”

“So, that’s how it is,” Hoult said. “Although I admire your courage, I never give in to others in the arena.”

“I can’t ask for anything better.” Manny let out a breath and said, “Draw your sword.”

Hoult shook his head and tossed his level 29 Superior Divine Weapon, Crimson Fire, to the side. That crimson red longsword immediately drew everyone’s attention.

Hoult said, “If I were to use the Crimson Fire to deal with you, I would be too much of a bully. In today’s arena battle, I’ll only use the Crimson Fire when I’m up against Fang Xingjian.”

Manny smiled. Although his eyes were smiling, they held a majestic fury.

“It’s always like this... I really don’t understand geniuses like you... Why do you always look down on others?”

After saying this, there was a sudden loud slap across space, and the area within a hundred meter radius seemed to become two times heavier. The ground cracked, and the air turned heavy. It was as though they were now in the deep seas.

Such a strong pressure was enough to make ordinary Knights

drop to their knees.

However, Hoult smiled as though he had not felt anything and said, “The gravity seems to have become stronger? But the difference is so small that I can’t really feel anything.”

Manny’s brows furrowed. To think that his opponent did not even flinch under the pressure of him doubling gravity...

“That’s right, have you seen the milky way before?”

The next moment, countless flashing spots of light spurt out from Hoult’s palms, circulating around him like the nebula and the milky way in the universe. They spread out endlessly, causing the whole place to appear very magnificent and luxurious. It was said to be the most beautiful attack performed since the start of the arena battle, giving rise to cries of amazement from countless young aristocrat ladies.

Chapter 234 Arena (Part III)

Looking at the dazzling stream of stars expanding out around him, Hoult said calmly, “Did you know that long, long ago, there were countless dazzling milky ways in the skies above our heads? My Killing technique, Astral Tempest, was based on this.”

A Knight’s body and bones were extremely strong, many times more so than ordinary people. It was the same for their stem cells and osteoblasts.

Therefore, the rate at which their bones grew was much faster, and it was harder for them to suffer from fractures in comparison to ordinary people. Even if they suffer from fractures, they would recover faster.

Moreover, Hoult’s stream of stars was formed from osteoblasts, the ones which were eliminated from his body daily. After going through tempering by the Astral Tempest, the powers of ether particles were being channelled in.

Hoult’s Astral Tempest was being replenished by his osteoblasts daily, and after about every ten days, it would be swapped out completely. This meant that the strength of his Astral Tempest would continue to grow as he did.

Now, as a level 19 Knight at his peak, the Astral Tempest formed from Hoult’s osteoblasts would naturally also be at the level of a level 19 Inferior Divine Weapon.

Although Manny did not know of the Astral Tempest’s prowess, looking at that dazzling stream of stars, which filled up the place and was flashing a silvery white flow, made his brain send him signals of extreme danger continuously.

Standing at the center of the Astral Tempest, Hoult looked at the stream of stars surrounding him and said calmly, “Dance, stars.”

Boom! The next moment, the entire Astral Tempest seemed to

turn into a tropical tempest from a calm sea surface. The stars soared up, bringing along the majestic prowess of a tsunami as it smashed toward Manny.

Each of the light spots had the strength of a level 19 Inferior Divine Weapon, and their prowess were comparable to bullets. Packed tightly, their combined prowess was like the majestic mountains and seas. They were not something the flesh could withstand against.

With a tremendous boom, Manny's location was completely drowned by the Astral Tempest. However, with a turn of his head, Hoult looked toward his right, where Manny had dashed over to unknowingly.

A powerful palm hit out across space, and the violent gravitational field landed on Hoult, like a crane smashing down. Distinct air currents appeared all around Hoult's body, and all of the Astral Tempest stars were pushed down to the ground in that instant.

The ground under Hoult's feet broke into countless cracks, and his feet sank three inches into the ground. However, he was still unharmed. Let alone getting injured, he did not even bend his spine in the slightest.

"You attacked me again?" Hoult smiled. Then the Astral Tempest once again started to surround Manny again as though they had been summoned.

With a huge boom, countless silver spots of light clashed together furiously. It was as though Mars was colliding with Earth, but it was also as though several ten thousand thunder rumblings rang out all at once.

However, as the stars fell back, a dark black colored wall was revealed.

Before Manny was hit by the attack, he had released a punch and

flipped up the ground's surface. He then reinforced it with gravitational force, using it to block Hoult's attack.

However, he had merely blocked off this one attack. Then in just a single second, the Astral Tempest shot out once again. Thrusting forth at a rate of a hundred thousand times per second, it crumbled the wall.

Manny leaped up, dodging the second attack from the Astral Tempest. However, Hoult merely smiled as he watched. From the beginning, he had kept his hands in the pockets of his Knight attire, watching on as the Astral Tempest attacked.

Manny leaped up high into the air, while countless spots of light gathered underneath him, waiting to launch the fatal attack when he landed.

“It's over!”

“The powers, scope, and speed of the Astral Tempest are too powerful! Jumping into the air is like heading into a dead end.”

“These are Hoult's abilities? To think that just earlier, I had thought Fang Xingjian would become number one. I've taken the legacy of a Divine level expert too lightly.”

Just as these thoughts flashed through the minds of the spectators, Manny, who had leaped into the air, curled his lips into a faint smile. He seemed to have also sensed the gazes of pity, astonishment, and ridicule from the countless people present.

As his speed grew increasingly slower and was about to reach the highest peak in his jump, he pushed his hands out to his sides and stopped suddenly in mid-air as though time had frozen.

Hoult smiled. “As expected, you're already able to control your own gravity. However, you won't be able to win me by just being able to float.”

Manny said confidently, “Your Astral Tempest is truly amazing. If it were to hit me, I would definitely die. However, its flaw is also

clearly visible.”

Hoult looked at Manny and asked curiously, “Oh? What is it?”

“Its strength is high, but it doesn’t have enough power! Otherwise, they would have been able to break through my defences earlier.” As he spoke, Manny put his palms together, activating his Killing technique, Territorial Grandiosity. In that instant, the entire arena was encompassed by waves of gravitational fields, and amidst the air ripples, which could be seen by the naked eye, the gravity weighing down on the arena grew heavier rapidly.

The ground continued to crack, and the Astral Tempest, which had previously been very active, was now calming down gradually. It was as though they were being held down through their weakest spots and pressed down to the ground.

Perspiration appeared continuously on Manny’s forehead. It was all thanks to his comprehension from the Pantheon Monument that he was able to perform this Weighted Territory skill from the Territorial Grandiosity.

While Manny was in mid-air, the Astral Tempest, which was suppressed by gravity had no way of attacking him. So, Hoult could only receive Manny’s attacks passively.

‘It’s very difficult to truly attack him. But if I can continue to suppress him like this and then think of ways to push him out of the arena...’

Just as Manny was thinking this, he saw Hoult smiling once again.

“I see. Seems like you’ve misunderstood something,” Hoult said calmly. Simultaneously, he flicked his bangs to the side as he smiled and said, “Did you know? When I was cultivating in the Myriad Star Palace, the basic status of the entire place had a gravitational force at least ten times stronger than gravity.

“Therefore, your attack is actually useless to me.

“As for the Astral Tempest’s weakness...” The next moment, silver lights lit up in Hoult’s eyes, as though a stream of stars had appeared there as well.

“I wasn’t even controlling it earlier. If I were to truly control it, then it should be like this...”

Before he finished his words, the stars on the surface shot out silver light which was ten times brighter. It then shot up into the skies like a light pillar, completely encompassing Manny’s body.

Amidst his terrified cries, Manny, who was now covered in blood, tried to land outside the arena. Before he did so, his fists clenched together tightly again.

Hoult’s countenance turned slightly pale when his gravity was shifted to the opposite direction in that brief instant. He shot up into the air like a rocket.

Manny continued to float slightly in mid-air, and his bloody face broke into a smile.

Even if Hoult were able to come back at a later time, the strong gales high up in the air and the atmosphere had already have sent him flying out of the arena. It was impossible for him to return to his original position.

This was Manny’s last resort.

“Have I won?” Manny stared at the black dot, which became increasingly smaller in the sky. He felt Hoult had already left his area of control.

Next, Hoult’s speed would decrease gradually, and he would then start to descend. At the same time, he would be blown off course by the strong gales and out of the battle coliseum.

Just as Manny was thinking of this, a weird gleam flashed past Hoult’s eyes while he was in the air.

The Killing technique, Astral Bodies Projectile, was activated.

Chapter 235 Arena (Part IV)

The Astral Tempest in the air condensed together suddenly, turning into a silver silhouette in a brief instant. The silhouette looked just like Hoult.

The Killing technique, Astral Bodies Projectile, allowed its user to move their consciousness into an object, they had been into contact with for a long period of time, and in turn, control it.

Manny looked at this scene in shock. The Hoult, the Astral Tempest had constructed, made a dash, and his silver palm pressed down onto Manny's head, smashing Manny down onto the ground outside of the arena.

From there, the Astral Tempest then once again turned into a milky way. It cut across the sky and caught Hoult, who had lost his consciousness. It carried Hoult's physical body carefully into the arena.

Finally, the Astral Tempest scattered. Hoult regained his senses once again and opened his eyes.

He nodded to Manny, saying, "Your Killing technique, Territorial Grandiosity, must have already exceeded level 10? Otherwise, you would not be able to execute a gravity reversal.

"You're truly an expert in controlling gravity. However, we, from Myriad Star Palace, are greater experts in this area. Although I do not specialize in controlling gravitational forces, I've gained a lot of experience in this area. If this wasn't the case, your chances would've been higher."

Manny exhaled and said, "What's the point of saying so much? A loss is a loss. I'll wait to see you fighting for first position with Xingjian."

Hoult had won in the fight against Manny. This battle once again displayed how powerful, Hoult, who had inherited the legacy of a

Divine level, was. His two Killing techniques, the Astral Tempest and the Astral Bodies Projectile, as well as that strong physique which could withstand a pressure ten times that of gravity... All these showed the strong foundations of a Knight who was at the top.

“Amazing.” Adri let out a long breath. This second transition level 25 Conferred Knight could not help but comment when he saw Hoult’s performance. “To think that a Knight could be so powerful. As expected of one who has inherited a Divine level expert’s legacy, Myriad Star Palace’s ultimate skill. I’ve gained new insights today.”

In this battle, everyone witnessed Hoult’s strength. This caused everyone to feel anticipation over how Fang Xingjian would perform in the next arena battle.

Adri glared at Fang Xingjian as he went up and mumbled, “Let me see what abilities you have.”

Mongul City’s City Lord was doing the same, casting all his attention on Fang Xingjian. He wanted to take a good look at this genius, who had wiped out his son’s aspirations, and see just how powerful he was.

After Fang Xingjian went up, a Knight with black hair, black eyes and yellow skin continued to take deep breaths.

This Knight was over fifty years old and was a senior Knight who went by the name Meng Hao. Although he had entered the top 16, his performance in the previous three stages had been far from eye-catching. It could be said that he was practically an invisible existence.

However, knowing he was about to battle against one of the strongest contenders for first place, he now felt as though all the blood in his body was boiling.

Feeling the gazes of all the spectators in the entire battle coliseum

focused on him, Meng Hao laughed coldly to himself.

“Haha, go ahead. Look down on me.

“Take me lightly, view me in contempt. It’s fine if you look down on me.

“I’ll give all of you a great surprise, and let all of you know what true power is.”

Half a year ago, Meng Hao had been an ordinary Knight. However, half a year ago, he had encountered a few black-clothed men, who spoke a language he did not understand and wore clothes he had never seen before. They had grabbed him and brought him to a place for manufacturing and processing metal.

They had cut his head open, added some things into his brain and told him that if he did not listen to what they said, they would use the objects inside to turn his brain into cooked beancurd.

At the start, Meng Hao, naturally, had not complied. However, after several punishments of experiencing headaches so strong, which made his head feel like it was about to burst, he started to give in.

Then five months ago, those men in black carved layers of complicated prints on his chest and back. They were like tattoos, but they were many times more amazing than tattoos.

These were Magic prints, the powerful sorcery which allowed one to receive diabolic energy in the Miracle World.

Meng Hao took in a deep breaths, feeling as though his entire body was swelling up. His skin turned increasingly tough and shiny, as though he had been covered with layers of crystals.

Pitter patter sounds of explosions emerged from his body. These sounds were from the trembling of every one of his bones, as though steel bars were knocking against each other.

Amidst the series of explosions, Meng Hao’s body became about

over three meters tall, as though he was a mighty god who had come down to earth. The muscles all over his body glowed like titanium alloy, giving out the feeling of exceptional strength and tenacity.

Roar!

Meng Hao let out a loud bellow as his strength soared furiously. Heavy pants gushed out from his mouth, producing a tremendous force which caused countless spectators to be struck by a bout of dizziness.

Meng Hao's Knight attire swelled up with him but showed no signs of getting torn. Under the Knight attire, the prints on his chest and back were exuding hints of red light.

The evil gods' energies were being channelled into his body.

Taking a step forward, Meng Hao made a hole which was one meter deep. He then headed toward the arena, walking forward step by step. His feet were like two bombs, creating explosions as he stomped down on the ground. The spectators had the illusion as though the earth was trembling, and the mountains were swaying.

He then stomped down hard onto the ground, creating a sonic boom. A hole ten meters deep appeared in the ground below him, and he appeared in the arena instantly.

Meng Hao then took another step, putting a stop to his extreme speed. However, the arena seemed incapable of withstanding the force from his movement. The arena cracked from the impact of his stomp and turned into over ten boulders.

This strength and this aura were so overwhelming that it did not seem human. In this moment, all the spectators understood that not only was Meng Hao not a novice but that he was a strong expert. Meng Hao was a strong expert, who had tempered his body to far surpass that of Knights, and could even be said to be comparable to a Conferred Knight.

“Excellent. This match is going to be interesting,” Adri said. “Meng Hao’s explosive powers are already at the level of some Conferred Knights. To think that he could temper his attributes to this level... This Regional Selection is truly filled with hidden talents and experts.”

With Meng Hao’s explosive appearance, his aura shot up, and everyone’s interests were piqued. They were all very curious about how this battle would come to an end, and how Meng Hao and Fang Xingjian would perform.

They felt that even if Meng Hao was not as strong as Fang Xingjian, he was not too far away. Meng Hao should be able to let Fang Xingjian demonstrate a large portion of his battle prowess.

On the stands, there were a few black-robed men who were also looking toward the arena. One of them was holding onto a notebook and taking notes.

“Has it finally started?

“Then let us see what it means for the diabolic energy to be neutralized.”

Chapter 236 Arena (Part V)

Meng Hao's face had an extremely arrogant appearance. The cautiousness and patience he'd had for the past few decades had disappeared completely.

Feeling the thousands of gazes on him, he felt extremely satisfied and had a great feeling of delightfulness and exaltation.

This feeling made him his aura grow even stronger. In addition to his physique and strong presence, when Meng Hao stood in front of Fang Xingjian, he seemed like the Hulk fighting Captain America. [1]

Moreover, he understood clearly as to just how strong the diabolic energy he had was.

There were a total of twelve types of diabolic energy, which led to the segregation of twelve schools of Mages and twelve types of sorcery.

The sorcery he had was Red Sorcery, performed by a powerful Red Robed Mage.

Additionally, out of the twelve schools of sorcery, Red Sorcery was the one which was best in strengthening one's physique, strength and body's tenacity. It was one of the sorceries which was most suitable for face-to-face combat.

Looking at Fang Xingjian, he let out a cold laugh and said, "Fang Xingjian, you weren't expecting this, were you? You must have thought that it was just a harmless earthworm blocking your path, but it has now suddenly turned into a huge dragon. Are you astonished and disappointed?"

"You're thinking of fighting with Hoult for first place in the Regional Selection.

"But I want to pull you down from being one of the contenders for the Regional Champion and fight it out with Hoult."

“Earthworm? Huge dragon?” Fang Xingjian drew out the Styx, which was at his waist, slowly. Looking at the imprints on the Styx, Fang Xingjian shook his head and said, “There’s a saying that goes like this, ‘Even pearls as small as a grain of rice want to shine.’ Have you heard of it?”

Meng Hao frowned. This saying did not exist in Miracle World, but he could sense instinctively that Fang Xingjian’s words held disdain toward him. Therefore, Meng Hao’s face darkened as he asked, “What does it mean?”

Fang Xingjian flicked his finger on the Styx slightly, releasing a melodious and crisp ringing sound.

“It means that even pearls which are as small as rice grains want to shine before gemstones and pearls.” Fang Xingjian shook his head. “After cultivating for so many years, it has must have been hard for you to reach your current level. Since that’s the case, why did you need to come and be humiliated?”

Fury flashed in Meng Hao’s eyes. Ever since he received the diabolic energy, the people he hated the most were people who looked down on him. Fang Xingjian’s way of doing things at present was the greatest humiliation to him.

“Hmph, we’ll find out who is the grain of rice and who is the pearl after the fight.”

After saying this, Meng Hao’s fist, which was the size of a wok, punched out across space. In that instant, the Reduced Force Field exploded, causing the entire battered arena to be covered with sand and rock. The surging force hit into the air, creating air currents, which were like shock waves hitting out toward Fang Xingjian.

One punch followed after another and Meng Hao’s hands were like a hundred afterimages. The violent power compacted together in the air because of the amazing speed at which the punches were dealt.

Before the front rows of air currents hit their target, those at the back caught up and joined with them, pushing them forward.

Just like that, the strength of a hundred, or even a thousand punches, were condensed into the air currents, heading from one side of the arena toward another where Fang Xingjian was at. If Fang Xingjian were to leave the arena, it would be considered his loss. Therefore, Meng Hao's attack left Fang Xingjian with no way to escape. Fang Xingjian could only face the attack head-on.

This method of piling up power from his punches while using the air as the medium was his Killing technique—Gust Amassing Force.

However, for ordinary Knights, they were limited to stacking up ten or twenty types of forces. However, Meng Hao was now relying on his endless physical strength, supersonic speed, and that violent power, which was like that of a terrifying dinosaur. He amassed the power of hundreds of punches forcefully, launching the power toward Fang Xingjian in the form of shock waves.

In this moment, white steam was being emitted from all over his body. Meng Hao was like an engine moving at full power. His temperature was so high that even his skin had turned red, making him appear like a cooked prawn.

Countless spectators opened their eyes wide upon seeing such a terrifying explosive force. When had they ever seen someone performing the Killing technique, Gust Amassing Force, to this level?

‘The toughness of Meng Hao's body has already exceeded the level 21 Colossal Armed Ape. Additionally, he can perform martial techniques as well. Strong... He is really too strong. Let's see how Fang Xingjian is going to take this attack.’

In that instant, countless Knights present had this thought in their minds.

Faced with Meng Hao's extremely violent attack, Fang Xingjian had not thought of using speed or his sword intent to attack his opponent's flaws.

In today's arena battle, his goal was to get an overwhelming victory over all of the other examinees. He wanted to shock all the Knights by winning the first place with undeniable and absolute power.

What did it mean to be the undeniable champion? It was to be able to crush your opponents in all areas and aspects, and to maintain an overwhelming gap in battle prowess over all the other examinees.

It was only with this that he would be able to gain the most resources and face the least troubles. This would also wipe out at least 99% of the ill-intentions the people present had against him.

Therefore, when faced with Meng Hao's attack, he did not dodge or attack his opponent's flaws, nor did he employ means such as slicing through the attack. Instead, he wanted to use an attack which was even more violent and ferocious to push back and crush his opponent.

Therefore, without any hesitation, Fang Xingjian performed Terra Ingurgitation, an attack from the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves which he could only perform once every hour.

In that instant, everyone within a one kilometer radius from him felt something—the loss of gravity.

In that short moment, regardless of whether it were the humans, animals, buildings, walls—even rocks, tea cups, horse carriages, and everything on grasslands—everything seemed to be wriggling with the feeling of floating in the air.

It was because the gravitational force which had been acting on them was now all concentrated on Fang Xingjian. Then with a slash of Fang Xingjian's sword, they all gushed forward, following

the direction of the sword's tip.

The gravitational force acting on all the physical objects within a one kilometer radius... How violent was this force?

Putting everything else aside, even if it were just the gravitational force which was on all the spectators present in the battle coliseum, it would already be a terrifying force. Let alone the fact that within a one kilometer radius, there were still at least over ten horse carriages and over ten buildings, as well as countless stones and trees.

Moreover, now with Fang Xingjian's sword slash, the world within a one kilometer radius was as though it had been turned over and everyone felt as though they were flying. All the gravitational force, which had been acting on them, was now gathered onto Fang Xingjian's sword and then smashed against the shock waves in front of Meng Hao.

The spatial force smashed onto the Styx, releasing consecutive booms. However, it was just like an ant trying to shake up a big tree, or a group of ants trying to bang against a big mountain. All of the shock waves were smashed by the unbelievable gush of power and caused Meng Hao, who was still punching out, to sense a surge of power gushing back toward him. Before this surge of energy, the explosive force he unleashed was weak like a frail piece of paper, torn completely into shreds just in that brief instant.

'Too powerful.'

'Too fierce!'

The moment Fang Xingjian's longsword slashed out, the very last thing which popped up in Meng Hao's mind was Fang Xingjian's earlier words.

'Even pearls as small as a grain of rice want to shine...'

Then the next moment, his consciousness was completely devoured by the ferocious surge of power.

[1] Fictional superheroes appearing in American comic books published by Marvel Comics

Chapter 237 Arena (Part VI)

That single sword had contained all the gravity of the physical objects within a one kilometer radius. It was a sword which was as heavy as the heaven and earth. Before it even got near Meng Hao's body, the violent air currents were overpowered by this force from Fang Xingjian and formed into layers of strong air currents, which tore Meng Hao's body apart.

Several ten thousand tons? Several hundred thousand tons? Or was it several million tons?

No one knew how heavy Fang Xingjian's sword attack was. It was like a fuel-air explosive had been set off in the battle coliseum. The white force turned into waves which could be seen by the naked eye and blew out in all directions.

Amidst the strong tremors, sand and rocks got blown everywhere.

This was just a hurricane to start it off. When the power from this sword hit the ground, the entire arena immediately sank into the ground. As though an earthquake had struck the battle coliseum, a crack over a hundred meters long formed in the ground.

The thousands of spectators left their seats. As they had temporarily lost the gravitational force acting on them, the spectators were thrown up to a height of half a meter due to the tremors.

All the walls of the battle coliseum cracked apart, like a cake which had been sliced through by a knife. Both the ground and the walls started to tremor in a wave-like motion, sending many ripples outward.

Gravity then returned to the spectators, and they returned down to the ground. However, amidst the exclamations, a large part of

the west side of the battle coliseum crumbled, causing the entire arena to disappear and turn into a meteorite crater.

Tons of sand and dust were sent flying upward from the impact, filling up the whole place with dust.

In that moment, the entire coliseum looked like a natural disaster had just occurred there.

Amidst all the sand and dust, Governor Devitt waved his hand, bringing forth a hundred massive ice dragons.

Some of them passed through the sand and dust directly, absorbing them.

Some of the others started to move the crumbling rocks, mending the walls, protecting the spectators, and preventing accidents from happening.

However, everyone who had been able to come spectate were all nobles. Even if they were not Knights, their attributes would not be weak, and thus, they would not be in trouble just because of this 'minor earthquake'.

Governor Devitt spent a little bit of effort and cleaned up the place.

Then now, in the middle of the arena, there was only Fang Xingjian remaining. Not even Meng Hao's voice was had been left behind.

The several black-robed men, who were mixed in with the crowd, frowned. One of them spoke up, "The power strengthening effect was still there. Before the two of them collided, Meng Hao's body still received the enhancement from the Red Sorcery, showing no signs of weakening.

"But... when Fang Xingjian came over, all the force fields, which protected Meng Hao's body and increased his body's toughness, have all disappeared. Otherwise, with the magic prints that we casted... he shouldn't be eradicated completely, without even a

corpse left behind.

“This matter is not something we can interfere in anymore. Let’s report this to the higher ups.”

During this same moment, Fang Xingjian stood still in the arena, his mind still recalling the earlier scene.

When he slashed down, before his sword had reached Meng Hao, the force formed from the compressed air had already torn apart Meng Hao’s Knight attire.

That was when he had seen the imprints on Meng Hao’s body through his Heaven’s Perception.

‘Magic prints? So, it’s true that the people from Earth have started to infiltrate over here? Or have they already been infiltrating for a very long time?’

The spectators were also recalling Fang Xingjian’s sword attack which seemed to be able to transform the heavens and the earth.

Adri looked at Fang Xingjian dazedly and finally said, “This sword attack had converted all the gravitational force in the area, concentrating the gravity, which had been acting on us, onto his sword. Not only was the gravitational force transferred perfectly, but there wasn’t even a hint of backlash.

“His mastery is truly great.

“And the explosive force created from the transfer of gravitational force is truly violent... too violent...

“This is the martial art he comprehended from the Pantheon Monument? As expected of a Divine level expert’s legacy. I thought that he wouldn’t have mastered this yet since he has just acquired it. But to think that he has already reached such a level...

“If that’s the case, we can’t let him continue to grow any stronger. Otherwise, we’ll probably never have the chance to take our revenge.”

Mongul City's City Lord continued to recall Fang Xingjian's earlier sword attack, trying to figure out the level of explosive power it had produced.

“That attack from earlier was formed from at least the gravitational force within a three hundred meter radius or more. This is no longer a power that can be controlled by flesh and blood.

“To think that a first transition Knight can be allowed to tap into a portion of the tremendous powers from the heavens and the earth... The Melancholic Monarch's legacy is amazing, truly amazing...”

Mongul City's City Lord let out a deep sigh. He had known Fang Xingjian had solved all the mysteries behind the Pantheon Monument, but he had thought Fang Xingjian would need at least a few months before he could achieve some results from the Divine level expert's legacy. Moreover, that it would take a few years before he would be able to go around the world unhindered.

How could he have expected that within just a day, Fang Xingjian would already be able to perform such a vicious attack? This was far beyond his expectations.

He patted David on the shoulder and sighed, “Let's head back to Mongul City.”

Fang Xingjian's sword attack had truly wiped out the intentions of many people who wanted to make an enemy out of him.

This was also what made Adri different from David. Adri represented the Tresia Clan, who had sworn to fight to the death with Fang Xingjian. However, there was still room to ease the tension between David and Fang Xingjian.

Hoult could be said to have dealt with his opponent gracefully, like an aristocrat, in the previous battle. Employing various techniques and means, he had demonstrated his strong and unfathomable support.

As for Fang Xingjian, he had used the most violent and brutal means to crush his opponent completely.

Stationed near the arena, the gazes of all the other examinees changed as they looked at Fang Xingjian.

Anderson's pupils contracted, as though he was a cat who felt threatened, stationed subconsciously in a defensive stance.

Hoult's right hand continued to stroke the Crimson Fire's grip. It was because, at this moment, only this level 29 Superior Divine Weapon was able to give him absolute confidence.

All the people in the stands were chattering amongst themselves, occasionally throwing horrified and wary gazes toward Fang Xingjian.

The examiners looked toward the arena, and Governor Devitt sighed. "Meng Hao was quite a good seed. Although his talent was a tad weaker, his will must have been extremely strong for him to be able to cultivate his body to this level. It would have been good if he hadn't died." At the same time, the gaze he used to look at Fang Xingjian became scorching.

"This legacy left behind by the Melancholic Monarch must definitely stay within our Great Western Region," He said with a burning gaze. "I suggest allowing Fang Xingjian access to the Sacred Land of the highest level in our academy once he has entered."

"What?!" Luke, the oldest out of all four of the examiners, said, "The Sacred Land of the highest level? All along, it has only been accessible for yourself and the students preparing for the National Selection. For Fang Xingjian to be able to receive such great treatment just after he enters... There'll probably be many students who will not be able to accept this."

"What can't they accept?" Governor Devitt said unyieldingly. "Fang Xingjian's talent has proved worthy for us to provide any

amount of investment. Moreover, we've also spoken with him to understand his mindsets as well as his political inclinations. There isn't anything inappropriate."

Luke still shook his head and said, "I still think that this is too rushed. We must be more careful in nurturing someone like Fang Xingjian by giving him more tests. Otherwise, once he grows stronger and out of our control, the damage done would be ten or a hundred times greater than that of ordinary students."

Just as the two of them were debating, scarred face Armstrong stood up and said, "Alright, there's no use for us to fight over it here. Let's talk about it after the Regional Selection is over. I'll go fix up the battle coliseum."

Chapter 238 Top Eight

As Fang Xingjian's match ended, the top eight of the arena battle were finally decided.

They were respectively:

1. Fang Xingjian
2. Allen
3. Anderson
4. Caesar
5. Wei Leng
6. Schreyer
7. Rota
8. Hoult

Numbers one to four would have their matches in the first segment while numbers five to eight would have theirs in the second segment. They would be split into pairs to have their matches before the last two fought for the championship title.

For example, numbers one and two would have their match and the victor would fight against the victor that emerged between numbers three and number four. The one who won would then be the victor for the first segment and pitted against the second segment's victor to decide who would be the final champion.

Since there was a need to fix up the area, the examinees could only take a break now. Because Fang Xingjian's Terra Ingurgitation could only be performed once every hour, he did not mind taking a break.

Rota walked up to him and shook her head, "My opponent is Hoult. Seems like I'll only be able to compete for fifth, sixth, seventh, or eighth position."

She knew her worth and knew that it was impossible for her to be a match for Hoult.

Fang Xingjian nodded but did not say anything. He continued to keep his eyes closed as he cultivated his skills. Finally, after four days of ceaselessly cultivating his skills, his Ether Divine Art had finally reached level 4 while his High Frequency Silver Fox was now able to tremor 2000 times per second.

Rota let out a sigh. She felt helpless toward this cultivating maniac. To think that he was still cultivating his martial techniques during the breaks in the arena battle. He was really not willing to waste even a single second.

Seeing how Fang Xingjian was, Rota could not help but asked again, “Fang Xingjian, do you have something bothering you? Why do I feel that you always seem to have a whip behind you, pushing you to grab every bit of time you have for your cultivation? Won’t the stress be too heavy? Everyone has their own limits. With the way you’re pushing and forcing yourself, it’ll be easy for you bring things to the extreme.”

Rota had seen many Knights who had pushed themselves too far and ended up going crazy or dying.

She was not wrong. Everyone had their limits. For example, when a Knight cultivated, the initial plan would be to spend all of the time not eating or sleeping on cultivation. This seemed to be a perfect scenario, but out of a hundred Knights, there might not even be one who would be able to hang on.

It was more realistic to arrange time to relax or to find activities to let loose. It was very childish to believe that you would be able to exceed the limits and have no need to relax, being able to move like a spinning top at all times.

However, this was what Fang Xingjian was doing, and he was holding on. Rota felt that he was like a stretched out elastic and may break anytime. To be honest, she felt that Fang Xingjian’s

condition was very dangerous.

Although she had also devoted hard work into her training, she had always found time everyday or every week to relieve her stress.

However, hearing Rota's words, Fang Xingjian miraculously spoke.

He gave it some thought before replying, "There's no limits to martial arts. Putting aside those below the Divine level, even after reaching the Divine level, each Divine level expert would also be training in seclusion, seeking the endless mysteries.

"A person's lifetime is too short. It's so short that with just a blink of an eye, it'd already have been over.

"Having so little time to look into the endless mysteries that martial arts hold, one must treasure every little bit of time. If one were to slack, even if it was just a little, it would be wasting one's life."

After finishing this, Fang Xingjian stopped saying anything. His body was always cultivating sword arts for twenty-four hours a day. Even when he was not thinking nor speaking, his mind would still be cultivating sword arts. It was because he had even less time than what he had said.

Rota shook her head and turned, noticing that there were even more people in the stands than before.

Now that only the top eight in the Regional Selection were left, the atmosphere was increasingly heated up. The results of this year's Regional Selection would affect the budget allocated to the other Prefectural Academies. The difference of money allocated between each rank was measured in terms of tens of thousands of gold.

Moreover, there was also the gambling set-ups which involved hundreds of thousands of gold. Now, the matches between the top

eight had already attracted the attention of countless aristocrats in the Great Western Region.

It could be said that the matches that were to follow would not only affect the future of the twelve Prefectural Royal Academies in the entire Great Western Region, but also the wealth of countless aristocrats in the Great Western Region. They held the power to affect an entire region.

Under the control of the examiner, Armstrong, the ground was filled up, and the arena once again rose from the ground. It was now covered with a thick metallic glow. Clearly, a large amount of metal had been incorporated to strengthened the arena's toughness.

Parts of the battle coliseum which had been cracked or had crumbled earlier were now mended once again, returning to its previous appearance.

Although Armstrong did not fight, his ability to control the earth, changing the ground and controlling metal and rocks, had already displayed his strong powers as a Conferred Knight.

However, no one was concerned about his abilities at this moment. Everyone had their gazes fixed on the arena, waiting in anticipation for the next match to start.

The first match amongst the best eight was number one, Fang Xingjian, against number two, Allen.

The two of them headed up the newly constructed metallic arena. Allen was a man covered by a long sleeved, green robe. Since the start of the Regional Selection, he had used his skills in bare-fisted martial arts to arrive to where he was now. In the Pantheon Monument Observation earlier, he had comprehended the first level, showing talent that exceeded ordinary people.

However, facing Fang Xingjian now, he finally started to remove his green robe.

“I had wanted to save my trump for the last, but since I’ve encountered you in the match amongst the top eight, it’s impossible for me to continue to hold back.”

His words showed that he was extremely wary against Fang Xingjian’s abilities. In the blink of an eye, he removed his green robe, revealing a body covered with many horrifying scars, blood traces, poison wounds, and pus.

When he revealed his body, over 30% of the people present received a great shock. There were even some younger aristocrat ladies who were so scared that they shut their eyes, as if they had just experienced a nightmare.

Allen looked at his body and revealed a brutal smile. “The Killing technique I cultivate, the Myriad Poison War Deity, amasses countless poison elements, letting them use my body as a battlefield as they fight each other endlessly. I tap on the vitality they burst out to train my body.

“Although poison elements have strong damaging prowess, they also hold strong vitality at the same time. Otherwise, how could they have survived in this world for so long? Only people who understand this would be able to use poison elements to train their body.

“And the balance between the poison elements in my body is constantly overthrown. The poison elements change every single moment. Therefore, after being poisoned by the poison in my body...”

Before he could finish his words, Fang Xingjian shook his head and said, “Now, the people I hate the most are the ones who use poison in battles.”

With that, he took a step forward and walked up behind Allen. With a slight move, his longsword pierced toward Allen’s back. Allen was not an easy target. Almost at the same moment Fang Xingjian disappeared, he rolled to the ground, wanting to dodge

Fang Xingjian's sword attack. Concurrently, poison gas rose from where he had been standing, drifting toward Fang Xingjian.

However, how could Fang Xingjian possibly allow him to leave? He retreated and dodged the poison gas, and at the same time, unleashed two Ether Sword Ripples, one on the left and one on the right, slashing at Allen who was rolling on the ground. With a cry, Allen was sent flying toward the poison gas.

With a cold snort, Fang Xingjian passed by the poison gas while taking a large curve before thrusting out 188 consecutive sword attacks. Amidst the spurting poison blood and terrible cries, Allen was flipped as he was slashed time and time again.

How could he have known that just the fact that he used poison had already offended Fang Xingjian?

And in the following matches, as if affected by how brutal Fang Xingjian was, Wei Leng, Anderson, and Hoult all began attacking viciously too.

Chapter 239 Repetitive Brutal Attacks

In the second match amongst the best eight, a man by the name of Caesar stood before Anderson.

After the two of them went up to the arena, they started fighting without saying a word. It could be said this was the only match without any conversation between the participants since the start of the arena battle.

Caesar was encompassed by a steel armor all over his body. It was a level 9 Empire's Divine Weapon and was extremely valuable. Clearly, it had been forged specially for him by the academy or clan supporting him.

He held a longsword, which was an Inferior Divine Weapon with electricity and white light flashing around it.

With a single move, Anderson dashed into the shadows under his feet. Then with a leap, Anderson's shadow dashed out from the shadow under Caesar. Anderson's Shadow Tooth's strong spinning force thrust through Caesar's vest.

With a loud clank, the strong impact trembled through the entire armor. However, the impact of Anderson's attack was spread throughout the armor and was, in turn, nullified.

Caesar's armor was not the only thing which had the effect of dispersing power. Even his Killing technique, Conduction, was one which could channel power into the ground.

At the same time, Caesar thrust his longsword toward Anderson with a flash.

Anderson let out a cold snort, simply unwilling to dodge this spear attack. He channelled force into his Shadow Tooth and had it face the longsword head-on, causing Caesar to retreat by a step.

Caesar's armor, an Empire's Divine Weapon, had the weight of one ton. Caesar's build was also twice that of Anderson's.

Additionally, his two-meter-long electric spear had great might. To think that even with all these, Caesar was still pushed back by Anderson and his dagger, Shadow Tooth...

How high was Anderson's strength attribute?

Anderson gave everyone the chance to experience fully the Shadow Death God's dominating prowess in terms of its attributes. He simply stood before Caesar, not even using his dagger but just punching Caesar's armor time and time again, causing Caesar to retreat once again, this time by three steps.

When Anderson saw the longspear heading over, he edged his shoulder forward, and with a force like that of a mountain, he sent the longspear flying.

Caesar let out a loud roar and smashed down with his two fists which were covered in the armor. At the same time, he put his legs and knees together, and it seemed as though the number of hands and feet he had had increased instantly. Then all of Caesar's limbs smashed violently toward Anderson.

Facing Caesar's sudden explosive force, Anderson appeared to be fiercer and more brutal, fighting ruthlessness with ruthlessness and fighting force with force. Anderson's punches and kicks clashed against his opponent's armor, and when his knee met his opponent's, it was like a comet had struck Earth. Rows of air currents shot out as the two of them collided time and time again.

Caesar's armor and his Killing technique, Conduction, were all highly effective in mitigating and nullifying powers. He was like a giant sponge, being able to stand firmly regardless what kind of crazy attacks he was hit with.

However, Anderson was now attacking him at his strongest point, meeting fist with fist, kicks with kicks, and shoulders with shoulders. He was attacking fiercely, pushing Caesar down.

Finally, after twenty moves, Anderson bellowed loudly and

punched down on Caesar's chest, causing Caesar to drop to his knees. Although Caesar's body was unharmed, he felt like he had been run over by a large truck. The muscles all over his body were aching, and he could not bring up any more strength.

His body had fallen limp after receiving the tremendous impacts time and time again.

Looking at how his opponent had dropped to his knees, Anderson grunted coldly and kicked Caesar out, showing no mercy. He sent Caesar, who was over one ton in weight, flying out of the arena.

Seeing how calm Anderson was, and how he was not even panting, everyone seemed to once again sense the boundless violence in him.

The growth in the attributes Shadow Death God had given him, had truly surpassed those in all the first transition jobs. He had managed to smash through Caesar and his tough defences despite not having used any of his Killing techniques.

The third match was between Wei Leng and Schreyer.

This Schreyer was an extremely thin Knight. Rather than a Knight, he looked more like an old farmer. However, despite this, the old farmer still managed to persist and went on into the top eight. Naturally, there would not be anyone who would despise him.

Wei Leng was the same. When this man, who was silent like a mountain as though each of his words were gold, arrived on the arena, he started to flex his limbs. Unleashing a tremendous surge of aura, he was like a wild beast who had opened out its claws fully.

Wei Leng was an expert who had comprehended Heaven's Perception to begin with and had reached this point just by relying on Heaven's Perception alone. He was clearly a person who had taken spiritual training very seriously.

In that instant, Wei Leng's aura exploded, causing Schreyer to

feel slightly terrified. Schreyer's gaze had changed slightly as he stared at Wei Leng's body, showing great wariness.

Wei Leng said coldly, "You're already frightened... You'll definitely lose this match. You might as well give up directly."

Schreyer let out a cold laugh and did not say a word. The next moment, numerous tens of silhouettes appeared behind him suddenly. They were not afterimages but illusions with material bodies.

Wei Leng shook his head and sighed, "Why don't you think about your family? Why do you need to risk your life here?"

Wei Leng's words were very simple, crude even. However, there was a strong and amazing power in his tone, which caused Schreyer to sway once again with just a few words.

Schreyer knew he could not continue listening to what his opponent was saying. So, he moved, and the numerous tens of illusionary silhouettes moved along with him, dashing toward Wei Leng.

Wei Leng swept his longsword out, causing over ten of the silhouettes to disappear. In the next moment, more of them dashed over. However, Wei Leng's longsword was like a series of electrical currents lined up together, destroying all the silhouettes which came near.

He did not use a lot of strength nor was his speed was fast, but he would always be able to kill the silhouettes.

Looking at how Wei Leng seemed to be in solitude state, Schreyer only felt that his opponent's longsword was getting increasingly faster, as though it was going to surpass the speed at which he could create more illusionary silhouettes.

From Schreyer's viewpoint, he was having an intense battle with Wei Leng. However, from Wei Leng's perspective and the viewpoint of the spectators, Schreyer was just standing there

motionless, allowing Wei Leng to walk up to him gradually. Then with a light push, Schreyer was sent out of the arena.

‘What’s going on?’

“It’s an illusionary type Killing technique! How amazing, I haven’t seen such a powerful illusionary Killing technique before.”

“When did Schreyer fall into Wei Leng’s illusion? When they were talking? Or had he been struck by the illusion from the moment he entered the arena?”

The spectators were buzzing in their discussions as Wei Leng went down from the arena. It was then that Schreyer regained his senses, as though he had just woken up from a dream. His eyes were still filled with haziness.

For the next battle, the final batch amongst the top eight, it was finally Hoult’s and Rota’s turn.

Looking at Rota walking up the arena, Hoult smiled and said, “It’s not easy for a lady to be able to reach this stage. Seeing how you managed to win the previous battle by employing mental tricks, you should know that you’re not my match. It’ll be wise for you to give up this match and save your energy to fight for the fifth, sixth, seventh or eighth place.”

Rota stretched her neck and flexed her four limbs, elbows, ankles and wrists, releasing pitter pattering noises. Her vital energy and blood bubbled, creating swooshing sounds and displaying her strong physical strength.

While she warmed up, she said, “Schemes are but means. A true Knight must be able to press forward with an indomitable will. Being decisive is when you give up to prevent severe injuries after being suppressed by the opponents.

“Without even a single attack, giving up before entering the arena... That is pure cowardice.

“To be unable to tell the difference between decisiveness and

cowardice... It seems like although you're well-trained physically, you still have many flaws mentally. Maybe you'll attain Heaven's Perception later than me."

The moment Rota went up, she challenged Hoult head-on, trying to weaken his momentum through her words. She knew she was not a match for Hoult, but when it came to fighting for the top eight places in the Regional Selection, a lot of money, resources and rewards were involved. So, she would naturally give it her all and try to fight for it.

Chapter 240 Going All Out

As a disciple under the wing of a Divine level expert, although Hoult's performance in the Regional Selection for the past few days had been slightly worse than Fang Xingjian's, it was still dazzling, making it hard for people to ignore. After Fang Xingjian had killed Meng Hao in a single move, he had become the one and only candidate who could compete with Fang Xingjian for the Regional Champion title.

Hoult's momentum was going strong. Other than Fang Xingjian, there was no one else who could fight against him.

Therefore, in order to weaken his aura, Rota challenged him verbally.

However, hearing Rota's words, Hoult was not infuriated. He merely calmly said, "Since you have a courageous heart which fears no challenges and continues to push on forward, and you're able to deploy all means to achieve your aims in battle, you're really a talent in battle.

"However, right now, I'm not interested in sparring with you. My interest now is..."

With that, he turned his head and fixed his gaze on Fang Xingjian. Fang Xingjian seemed to not have noticed anything, just keeping his eyes closed tight as he cultivated his sword technique.

In the short moment it took for Hoult to turn his head, Rota's longspear shot out as she activated the Void Penetrative Divine Spear. It shot out over tens of meters with an immense penetrating force, hitting a spinning force onto Hoult's face.

'I've succeeded!'

Sensing the feeling in her hands, Rota was overjoyed.

'To think that he was so careless, losing his attention in the arena battle...'

Just as Rota was thinking about this, she suddenly let out a cold snort and quickly retreated seven steps before coming to a stop.

However, the long spear in her hands continued to tremble non-stop, clearly a result from the strong impact.

‘How could this be? I clearly hit his face. No matter how strong he is, there’s no way he would be able to block this spear attack with Reduced Force Field.’

Rota looked at Hoult, and in the next moment, her pupils contracted. She saw her opponent’s face, neck, and other body parts sparkling with star-like spots. Under the sun, they were like sparkling diamonds.

“Astral Tempest?”

Hoult replied calmly, “That’s right. The skin on the surface of my entire body has a protective layer formed by the Astral Tempest. With your strength and Killing technique, you don’t seem to be able to break through my defences. You’re better off stepping down by yourself.”

Rota did not reply, but her expression turned grim. When Hoult saw this, he shook his head, releasing countless silvery lights. The Astral Tempest had been activated.

As she watched the countless spots of light coming in on her, Rota suddenly took three steps back and, with a light leap, left the arena.

Looking at Hoult’s surprised expression, Rota smiled and said, “I’m no idiot. Since I can’t even break through your Astral Tempest, I’ll naturally not continue to cling on obstinately. Hmhmph... I’ll wait to see your battle with Fang Xingjian.”

With that, she suavely took her leave.

‘Being able to advance and retreat with ease, not only being able to stand up to my pressure, but also being able to leave without fear of losing reputation before so many people...’ Hoult looked at

Rota's back view and smiled, 'What an interesting lady.'

Now, the best four in the arena battle had finally been decided.

They were Fang Xingjian, Anderson, Wei Leng, and Hoult. With the time spent on fixing the arena and for the other matches to go on, Fang Xingjian had finally gotten past one hour and now had the opportunity to use Terra Ingurgitation one more time.

The next matches were Fang Xingjian against Anderson and Wei Leng against Hoult. The victors of each respective match would then fight to be the final champion.

It was finally the semifinals. The atmosphere got even more heated. The names of the remaining four would concern the hundreds of thousands of budget the respective Prefectural Academies would receive.

Moreover, the gambling dens in the entire Great Western City were going crazy. Countless people were placing their bets, causing the bets regarding the Regional Selection placed in the Great Western City to reach up to millions.

With so much money involved, it was sufficient to affect the entire situation in the Great Western Region.

Moreover, the reward for the champion was a complete set of level 29 Superior Divine Armor.

Just look at Hoult's level 29 Superior Divine Weapon, the Crimson Fire... How powerful would a complete set of level 29 Superior Divine Armor be?

Countless burning gazes were fixed on the four, mixed with various emotions. The semifinals were finally about to start.

However, when Fang Xingjian was seated and waiting for the battle to begin, a maid walked up to him and passed him a towel and some water.

When his Heaven's Perception scanned the tray she was holding,

he was stunned for a moment.

There was a message written in water.

‘If you’re willing to lose the next match, we’re willing to pay thirty thousand gold.’

Although there was no hint of threat behind the words, thirty thousand gold was an enormous sum. Putting aside the fact he would no longer have to worry about basic necessities, this sum was a significant amount, even to a Conferred Knight. It could even allow one to purchase a Superior Divine Weapon.

However, why would Fang Xingjian be bothered with him? How could thirty thousand gold be compared to the reward of the Regional Champion? He ignored it and waited quietly for the match to start.

The semifinals were officially starting. With a dash, Anderson appeared on the arena, shooting Fang Xingjian a challenging look.

Compared with Anderson’s speed, Fang Xingjian took his time to appear on the arena with a few flashes. ‘Looking’ at Anderson and the surrounding, Fang Xingjian said calmly, “The environment here is actually not suitable for your battle style.”

How could Anderson appreciate Fang Xingjian’s concern? He was one who would remain stubborn, even on the verge of death. He said directly, “Hmph, I’ll only need 80% of my powers to deal with you guys.”

Fang Xingjian shook his head and said, “It’ll only be a little bit interesting if you were to use 100% of your powers.”

Before Anderson could understand the meaning behind his words, amidst his astonished gaze, Fang Xingjian took a few steps forward before he suddenly stopped. Lifting up his right leg gently, he stomped down viciously at the speed of lightning.

With a loud, explosive boom akin to a great thunderbolt dropping down, dust and sand soared up, and immediately, the

entire arena broke into several pieces, turning into pieces of rocks as they shot upward.

Anderson could only feel his heart palpitating. To think that in such a short moment, he had the feeling of facing a natural disaster.

The structure of the arena became many strangely-shaped boulders of varying heights shooting up. Some of them were the height of a man, some two to three men, some many meters tall.

With one stomp, Fang Xingjian had stepped on the arena's weakest point. The tremendous power channeled down into the ground, causing an explosion within the arena. It was as if this stomp had the power to transform the world, causing the entire arena to be changed into a rocky terrain.

In this rocky terrain, there were various shadows, blind spots, cracks between boulders, and strangely-shaped stone pillars. This was now a terrain that the Shadow Death God loved the most, one that was perfect for street battles and sneak attacks.

At that moment, Fang Xingjian's calm voice rang out, "Now, you'll be able to fully showcase your powers.

"You can have the first attack. If I were to attack first, you wouldn't have the chance to attack anymore. You've gone through so much to come to the battle arena in the Regional Selection... You must showcase your battle prowess fully before you can return."

Fang Xingjian's series of movements, sudden stomp and explosive force, all at the expense of depleting his vital energy and blood, were so that Anderson could unleash his full powers.

Chapter 241 Cleaning Up

“Alright, I hope you won’t regret this.”

Anderson was really annoyed. He knew it would be very, very difficult for him to defeat Fang Xingjian. However, since his opponent was being so arrogant, it might not be impossible for him to win.

‘Even if I can’t beat you, I must deal you a heavy blow so that you’ll remember me.’

With a flash, Anderson disappeared into the shadows at the side.

The Shadow Death God had the ability to turn into shadows, allowing the manipulation of shadows which included letting them jump. Now that the arena had been made into a forest of boulders, where there were shadows all around them, it was the best set-up for him to display his abilities.

In just a moment, Anderson’s silhouette camouflaged into the darkness, completely invisible. The shadows in the entire terrain started to move about unceasingly, as though countless wild beasts were hiding amongst the shadows, waiting for the moment for them to pounce forth.

However, being blind, Fang Xingjian could neither see nor sense the changes in the shadows beyond a ten-meter radius. He could only ‘see’ the changes which were within the ten-meter radius through his Heaven’s Perception.

However, there was absolutely no need for him to sense anything. As long as the opponent’s attack was within his ten-meter radius, everything would be in his complete control.

Amidst this calm before the storm, three flying daggers shot out from behind Fang Xingjian. Each of them sliced through the air and shot out at supersonic speed, releasing sharp shrieks.

These were all flying daggers thrown out by Anderson. This was

also the first time he had displayed his skill with flying daggers in the Regional Selection. To think that he was capable of making the flying daggers travel at supersonic speed with his bare hands... This was probably a skill which could allow him to defeat a large number of Knights.

However, when used on Fang Xingjian, this was far from enough to take him down.

With a flash of sword light, the three flying daggers were all intercepted. However, this was just the beginning. Just as the three flying daggers were intercepted, Fang Xingjian moved his body, and another three flying daggers shot out from the shadows behind him.

Then came another three, and another three, and another three... Countless flying daggers shot out from the shadows in every direction. They came from as far as beyond ten meters away and as near as within a one meter distance. Several tens of flying daggers shot out consecutively, taking up almost every inch of space around Fang Xingjian.

‘Thinking of distracting me with flying daggers before finding a chance to attack me?’

Fang Xingjian’s mind continued to turn while the longsword in his hand moved incessantly. As though it was a theatrical act, Fang Xingjian knocked down all the flying daggers which had shot out from the shadows with great ease.

Just as he knocked down the last flying dagger, Anderson came out from the shadow of Fang Xingjian’s sword. All the powers from Anderson’s body was focused on this single point.

The Killing technique, Piercing Sun, was activated. Accompanied with the Shadow Tooth’s spinning strength, it was as though Anderson had turned into a giant drill, thrusting toward Fang Xingjian.

Fang Xingjian activated Boundaries Negation and retreated abruptly at ten times that of supersonic speed.

As Anderson's Shadow Death God had the best job progression amongst all first transition jobs, his strength attribute far surpassed that of Fang Xingjian's. Unless Fang Xingjian used Terra Ingurgitation or tried to break through each of Anderson's attacks through his flaws, it would be impossible for him to receive Anderson's attacks head on.

The moment Fang Xingjian retreated, he noticed something troublesome. No matter how fast he retreated, Anderson was able to catch up.

It was because Anderson had came out from Fang Xingjian's shadow. So, when Fang Xingjian retreated, his shadow would follow, bringing Anderson together with it. No matter how fast he retreated, he would never be faster than his shadow.

As these thoughts flashed through Fang Xingjian's mind, the giant drill had reached about over ten centimeters in front of him. The violent outburst of air currents brushed against his face and body. They were like wind blades, wanting to slice through his skin.

'If I were to use Terra Ingurgitation, I would naturally be able to kill Anderson with ease.'

However, Fang Xingjian could only perform the Terra Ingurgitation once every hour. He was preparing for its next use to be on Hoult.

Therefore, he had only two options now: to receive it head on; or to attack Anderson and have both parties dealt with a heavy blow.

This time around, when Anderson attacked, Fang Xingjian had already had this planned out and put his life on the line.

Confronted with Anderson who was getting increasingly closer, the longsword in Fang Xingjian's hand changed slowly changed

and started to light up.

The Killing technique, Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash, was activated. Streams of light shot out from Fang Xingjian's longsword, altering the shadow's direction.

With a tremendous boom, the shadow was lengthened and displaced. Anderson, who had been on the top of the shadow, was now moved six meters away, knocking his head against a giant stone wall.

The stone wall cracked into numerous pieces under Anderson's Shadow Tooth, as though it had been torn apart easily like tofu.

Anderson stopped abruptly. Looking at the flashing glow on Fang Xingjian's longsword, Anderson's expression flickered incessantly.

By turning into and jumping with shadows... Aside from being able to execute concealed actions, the most powerful aspect of the Shadow Death God was the ability to stay locked onto a target like a maggot stuck onto bones. This made it very hard for the target to escape.

As shadows were formed from lights, Anderson's appearance and disappearance were all at light speed. No one could be faster than their own shadows.

However, as shadows came from light, what Anderson hated most were opponents who could release light.

‘Troublesome.’

Fang Xingjian had never previously displayed sword arts which could emit light.

The next moment, streams of sword Qi gushed toward Anderson, who had already turned into shadows once again and was blending back into the darkness.

However, seeing that Anderson had once again blended into the dark shadows, Fang Xingjian was neither anxious nor panicky. He

swept out continuously with his longsword, creating stream after stream of sword Qis. These sword Qis were like atmospheric dragons, circulating around his body unceasingly. As more and more of them amassed, they continued to fill up the entire arena.

“What is he trying to do?”

“Ordinary sword Qis should be incapable of hurting Anderson who is in the shadows, right?”

Amidst the spectators’ confusion, Fang Xingjian once again released streams of light from all over his body. He appeared to be like one of the legendary deities, with each inch of his skin covered in white light.

The streams of light joined up with the sword Qis and was reflected outward. In that instant, the entire arena was covered by the streams of light.

A moment passed, and all that was left were the shadows within the ten-meter radius of Fang Xingjian’s location. However, Fang Xingjian had intentionally planned for this to happen. It was because he was unable to see the existence of shadows beyond the ten-meter radius, let alone control them.

Anderson cursed to himself, ‘B*stard... I won’t even be able to use my own shadows now.’

The human body had shadows as well. Particularly, the shadows from when the opponent swung his weapon, or from the body’s natural construct: under the neck; armpits; and palms... These were all positions the Shadow Death God loved to use.

By appearing suddenly from the shadows under the opponent’s armpits or neck, they might still suffer from heavy injuries or even die from the sneak attack even if the opponent was many times stronger.

However, with Fang Xingjian’s sword technique being capable of releasing light as well as reflecting light, it was truly the greatest

nemesis of the Shadow Death God.

At the same time, Fang Xingjian's voice rang out, "Aren't you going to make your move? There should also be a time limit on how long you can stay in the shadows."

Anderson squinted. The next moment, the shadows in the entire arena started to spread out. Like a drop of ink falling into water... the shadows turned the entire arena into a pure black color.

Chapter 242 Obstacle

Anderson activated his skill, the Shadow Coffin, causing the shadows to spread out and encompass the entire arena as though they were alive. They were even heading toward Fang Xingjian in an attempt to wrap him up too.

These shadows were no longer purely shadows but shadows which contained some kind of weird power. Even the light Fang Xingjian emitted was unable to drive them away.

Moreover, with the entire arena wrapped up by the shadows, there was no way to dodge them.

Not only did the Shadow Coffin have the special effect of weakening material structure, but any living being the shadows wrap around would have their five senses removed, as though they were really dead and lying in a coffin.

Currently, this was a secret only Anderson was aware of.

After he wrapped Fang Xingjian up with the Shadow Coffin, Anderson shot out from the shadows, holding a black flat object in his hand and thrusting it out toward Fang Xingjian.

The flat object he was holding was very strange. It looked like a large shadow wrapped around Anderson's entire hand, but it then formed the shape of a blade and drifted about in mid-air. Anderson went on to exert some force, thrusting the shadow blade toward Fang Xingjian.

The skill to trap opponents was the Shadow Coffin, while the skill to kill them was the Death God's Dagger.

This was the Shadow Death God's ultimate killing technique—to trap the opponent in a coffin made from shadows before using the Death God's Dagger to kill them.

The legends of Miracle World said that the Death God stayed asleep in a coffin made from shadows. Each time he woke up, he

would kill someone with a dagger.

Anderson's job, the Shadow Death God, seemed to have inherited this legend.

The Shadow Coffin weakened the opponent and cut off his five senses.

The Death God's Dagger was a shadow with neither any thickness nor physical form. However, it could cut through anything.

With the two together, it would result in death almost every time.

During the whole process of when Anderson activated the Shadow Coffin and then perform the Death God's Dagger to pierce toward Fang Xingjian, both his expression and actions were very solemn. It was as though he was not killing someone but rather, conducting a mysterious ritual.

Every actions and step he took held a mysterious aura, as though he was about to send Fang Xingjian toward eternal darkness, offering him as a sacrifice to the death god in the legends.

A crisp pfft sound rang out. The Death God's Dagger pierced the Shadow Coffin gently and penetrated through it completely.

It looked just like a magic performance where a live person would be put into a box and then cut open.

After one attack, the entire Shadow Coffin transformed into countless fragments, floating in the air. Even the shadows on the ground, which seemed to be alive, were starting to retreat.

It was obvious Anderson would not be able to sustain the shadows in that state, which defied reasonings, for long.

After all the shadow fragments disappeared, nothing was left, not even Fang Xingjian's body.

Anderson's heart leaped. The next moment, he felt a surge of energy at the back of his waist. Caught unaware, he was struck by a

violent strength, and the impact flowed to every corner of his body. As it turned into tremendous pain, it sent him flying outwards as well.

With a light boom, Anderson noticed he was too close to the side of the arena. Although he had been kicked and sent flying a few meters away, he immediately tried to think of ways to land and stop his body's motion.

However, by the time he landed, he was already out of the arena.

Anderson lifted up his head suddenly and looked toward Fang Xingjian who was retrieving his leg slowly. Anderson shouted, "It's light? The reason you used light is not only to suppress my shadows but also to force me to use my best move? At the same time, you even refracted light to obstruct my vision, creating an illusion?"

Fang Xingjian kept his longsword and walked down the arena slowly.

Anderson shouted out loudly, "Was that it? Answer me!"

Fang Xingjian did not stop but said calmly, "You're relying too much on your eyes."

Hearing this, Anderson suddenly reached out to touch his eyes. That was true. As a Knight who needed to control shadows and deploy sneak attacks from the shadows, he was overly concerned over the changes between light and shadow. He was also overly reliant on what his eyes had told him.

Anderson threw a vicious glare at Fang Xingjian's departing silhouette. However, he no longer said anything and turned to leave.

In the stands, Ferdinand waved his hand strongly. Now, Fang Xingjian just needed to defeat Hoult in order to become the Regional Champion. Adding on to the bets he had placed with regards to the results of the previous stages, he would at least be

able to get a profit of at least two thousand gold.

The Deputy Commander of the Imperial Guards, Adri from the Tresia Clan, looked at Fang Xingjian who had won the match. Adri said coldly, “He appears to be generous, wanting to win over Anderson in all aspects, and even provided him with a good battle environment.

“But in the end, he’s still used light, not giving the opponent the chance to showcase his powers.

“This is because he still wants to save his energy and stamina for when he fights against Hoult. Hmph, seems like even he isn’t very confident in winning against Hoult. That’s why he has to save every ounce of energy to increase his chances of winning...”

Xiu Yi, who was beside him, asked, “Lord, between Fang Xingjian and Hoult, who do you think will win?”

“That sword attack Fang Xingjian used against Meng Hao earlier was very powerful, but so is Hoult’s Astral Tempest when paired together with the level 29 Divine Weapon. It’ll depend on who makes a mistake first and gets dealt a heavy blow.” Saying that, he laughed. “If Fang Xingjian is dealt a serious blow, it’ll be great for when we take action later.

“On the contrary, if he were to deal Hoult with serious injuries or even kill him, he would make himself an enemy of the Astral Ancestor’s Myriad Star Palace. That would be even better.”

Wei Leng and Hoult were already heading up the arena.

When the assistant examiner asked if they required for the arena to be cleaned up and fixed, both of them shook their heads.

Looking at Wei Leng, Hoult shook his head. Streams of silver light shot up into the sky, and the Astral Tempest spread out across the entire arena. It was like the mass of stars in the universe was surrounding Wei Leng.

Hoult did not give a hoot about Wei Leng. Compared to those

Knights who were still fighting with their bare fists and techniques, his Astral Tempest was already at the level of a second transition Knight. He was fighting with extraordinary strength.

Although Wei Leng had stepped into Heaven's Perception, it did not change the fact that his foundations for the past few decades had been too shallow. Even if he had attained Heaven's Perception, it would still take him several years or over ten years of hard work to catch up to Heaven's Perception.

Now, in terms of a battle of techniques, Wei Leng had the advantage. With his observation skills from Heaven's Perception, he could bring forth greater potential from his illusionary sword techniques, creating an even greater effect.

However, before absolute power, these were all meaningless.

Hoult clenched his right fist, and countless stars gathered together, transforming into a fist which could cover half the arena.

"One move. Wei Leng, if you can take this attack from me, we'll take it that you've won."

As he spoke, Hoult's palm faced down, pushing down through space.

At the same time, the huge palm made from myriad stars, which was hovering in mid-air, slapped downward. Wei Leng could only feel that the sky had turned dark, and with the palm slapping down, his vision of the sky seemed to have disappeared completely.

Chapter 243 Start of the Finals

Each of Hoult's words was like a big vat smashing down onto the ground, and all the spectators in the battle coliseum could hear them clearly.

Then, the palm smashed down.

The giant palm, formed from the myriad stars, was the size of half the arena. Each finger had been created with great detail and a life-like feeling, as though it really was a hand belonging to some giant.

However, this was not just in appearance. Such details displayed Hoult's mastery in the Astral Tempest. Every single star was within his control, and each minute strand of force was within his grasp.

Therefore, he was able to explode all of his force within that instant, slamming down such a terrifying attack.

If it were said that what Hoult had displayed earlier was his technique and experience, then this palm attack displayed fully his overwhelming powers, which would allow him to be amongst the best Knights.

Pure and blatant strength pressed down, and the exploding waves of air currents released explosive booms, as though all the air had been compressed together forcefully and then pushed out. Wei Leng even felt as though he was suffocating, like he could not breathe.

Hoult's palm attack made it seem like the whole world had collapsed. The explosive pressure from the air currents gave Wei Leng no chance of escaping. So, all he could do was block.

In that instant, Wei Leng let out a furious bellow and finally displayed the powers he had been holding back.

A hint of starlight came out from the tip of his sword, as though a

bright guiding star had appeared in the endless darkness.

This was the new Killing technique he had gained after comprehending the third level of the Pantheon Monument—Guiding Star in Darkness.

The Melancholic Monarch had created this Killing technique in order to restore the starry sky.

That was true. Back then, in order to attain a breakthrough after the Divine level, the Melancholic Monarch had the thought of creating an artificial star system to recreate the starry sky.

The Guiding Star in Darkness was a Killing technique he had created in order to shoot the stars up into the sky.

How powerful and terrifying was the power which was required for sending artificial stars from the ground up high into the sky? This showed just how ferocious a power was held in the move, the Guiding Star in Darkness.

Based on the foundation of exchanging information with ether particles, he had progressed further to the exchange of energy, creating a series of reactions with explosive powers. It was an extremely brutal power.

If it was said that Hoult's palm attack could cause the world to turn into a state of chaos as though the skies had collapsed... then Wei Leng's Guiding Star in Darkness was a hint of light shining out from the darkness, attempting to pierce through skies and escape out of this world.

Both techniques were extremely violent. That moment when the tip of the sword met with the giant palm, the whole world seemed to quiet down for just a second.

As Wei Leng's body flew out, Wei Leng felt as though his entire body had gone out of control. He felt as though the entire universe had been torn apart and his soul had flown out of this world.

It was as though Hoult's palm had sent his soul flying.

Wei Leng's feet stomped down continuously as he tried to stop his body. However, aside from creating a series of cavities in the ground with consecutive banging sounds and sending large pieces of rocks flying, there were no other effects. Wei Leng was soon pushed out of the arena.

Wherever he passed by, countless cavities were left behind.

When Wei Leng finally opened his eyes with great difficulty and looked at the arena, he discovered that the entire arena had been flattened by Hoult's attack. In the previous match, it could be said that Fang Xingjian's stomp had struck a flaw in the arena's structure, causing the creation of a stone terrain when his force exploded.

Hoult's palm attack was a showcase of pure brutal strength, smashing down the entire rocky terrain and turning the arena back to how it had been originally. Or perhaps it was even to the extent of pushing the terrain down to make the arena more compact.

Wei Leng smiled bitterly and said, "I can't even take one hit? It's not even an attack he had put all his powers into..."

With a sigh, he returned his sword to its sheath, only to discover that the longsword had shattered into pieces, leaving just a bare hilt. Wei Leng shook his head in resignation and left.

Finally, the two names for the finals were decided. Hoult stood up, with sparkling stars still surrounding around him as though he was the king of all gods, the sovereign of all stars. He stood at the center of the arena and looked at Fang Xingjian.

"Xingjian, I've just warmed up. Let's ignore the break time and start immediately."

Naturally, Fang Xingjian had no qualms about that. With a single step, he appeared in the arena, swift as the wind and quick like lightning.

At last, it was the final stage of the Regional Selection. The results impacted upon the possession of millions of gold and Superior Divine Weapons, as well as the plans of countless academies and clans. This long-awaited moment had finally arrived.

Tresia Clan's Xiu Yi could not help but say, "Amazing. Hoult is really amazing. In terms of strength, technique, Divine Weapon, realm, and Killing technique... they're all flawless. Amongst all the Knights, he's already standing at the top..."

"Alright, quiet now. Let's look at how this match will end. If we look at just those in the Knight level, from the past to the present, there are definitely not many who would be stronger than the two of them."

The one who said this was the Imperial Guards' Deputy Commander, Adri. At present, he was also drawn in by the battle between Fang Xingjian and Hoult. Both of them had displayed their might, which placed them high above all the other Knights, far surpassing the battle prowess the first transition Knights held.

Kirst's City Lord sighed and said, "From the past to the present, even when the Divine level experts were Knights at Fang Xingjian's and Hoult's age, there are probably less than ten of them who would be stronger than Fang Xingjian and Hoult right now."

"To have reached this level at the Knight-level... they've already reached the extreme limits."

The pinnacle of all Knights and the peak of all first transitions... The battle to determine the top Knight of the Great Western Region, and in turn, the distribution of the countless riches and resources, was about to start soon. Even Conferred Knights like Kirst's City Lord could not help but be drawn in.

It was because in the next few decades, or even in the next few hundred years, there might not be even one Knight like Fang Xingjian or Hoult. It was really too rare and exciting.

Even David and his father, Mongul City's City Lord could not help but feel slightly agitated. They did not even blink when they watched the two people in the arena, as though they were worried they would miss out on any exciting scenes.

At the examiner seats, old Luke stroked his beard and said, "This fight is really a fierce struggle between two evenly-matched opponents. His Majesty's move has really forced out all the talents in the world. Between Fang Xingjian and Hoult, who do you think will win?"

"Considering the course of events, it should be Fang Xingjian. His speed far surpasses that of Hoult's, and he can attack and retreat with ease. If he can use that attack he used to defeat Meng Hao earlier, his winning rate will be 60% or higher." It was Governor Devitt who had spoken. "However, till now, Hoult has not displayed the martial arts he has comprehended from the Pantheon Monument. Adding on to the fact that he is the grand disciple of a Divine level expert, once Fang Xingjian shows leniency for fear of offending a Divine level expert, the tables will probably be turned against him."

What he said was the truth. When two parties were engaged in a battle, both their reputations and backgrounds would be part of their powers. A strong reputation and support could bind their opponents, causing them be capable of displaying 70-80% of their true abilities.

At that moment, the atmosphere in the arena had been pushed down to the extreme. Hoult then spoke out. As he did so, it was as though each of his words descended from high up in the milky way or beyond the skies—as though many gods had landed to spread their words.

"Xingjian, it's finally time for the two of us to fight against each other."

Chapter 244 Duel (Part I)

After hearing Hoult's words, Fang Xingjian said calmly, "Although there are many participants in this Regional Selection, it's true that you're the only one who can make me fight with all I have."

Hoult laughed loudly and said, "That's right. Then let's cut the crap and let everyone see what real geniuses and true top notch Knights are like."

After he said this, strong gales filled up the entire arena. These air currents were formed from the rapid movements of the Astral Tempest.

However, the one who had truly taken action was not Hoult.

Fang Xingjian's longsword came to an abrupt stop right in front of Hoult, where countless stars were flashing.

Then, there was a delayed tremendous boom, and a majestic force of air blew away all the surrounding stars.

Amidst the huge boom, there were also sounds of clashing metals, air explosions, as well as the tremors of their vital energy and blood.

The horrifying sound waves spread out in all directions. This caused those who had weaker attributes, as well as the aristocrats, who were not even Knights, to start feeling light-headed and short of breath as though they would faint any moment now.

In the next moment, countless silhouettes of Fang Xingjian flashed around Hoult wildly. The many streams of stars were like numerous huge pythons, using their bodies to fend off Fang Xingjian's attacks continuously.

Each slash from Fang Xingjian could cause large sections of their bodies to explode and disperse. However, soon after, more of them would amass.

It was unexpected that while Hoult was facing Fang Xingjian, who had his Boundaries Negation activated, Hoult could rely on the massive number of streaming stars to fight against Fang Xingjian's speed.

Fang Xingjian was like a series of black lightning strikes, slashing out an incessant stream of attacks around Hoult.

For the spectators who were watching Fang Xingjian and Hoult fight, there was a slight delay with the sounds and motions of the battle. This was because Fang Xingjian's speed had reached up to ten times that of supersonic speed, which caused everyone to feel awful.

The rapid friction in the air howled like a demoness, and all the spectators, who were below Knight-level, had no choice but to retreat. If they were to stay on, the vibrations from the aftermath of the battle would probably kill them all.

The weak did not even have the right to watch this battle.

Amidst the swirling stars, Hoult stood there, motionless with his arms folded across his chest. His eyes flitted about continuously, trying to get a hold of Fang Xingjian's silhouette at all times.

However, Fang Xingjian's speed was simply too quick. After each collision with the Astral Tempest, he would quickly slip away as though he was completely unrestrained. Fang Xingjian merely continued to use the sword Qis created by slashing rapidly through the air and whipping the Astral Tempest.

The high temperature caused a faint red light and white steam to appear on Fang Xingjian's body.

Then another loud explosion rang out. Up to a hundred sword Qis mixed together with the Ether Sword Ripples tore through the Astral Tempest, and Fang Xingjian's sword slashed down onto Hoult.

However, with a loud clank, Hoult retreated three steps back.

Aside from the many star traces appearing on his face, he seemed unharmed.

The surface of his body was encompassed by stars, like he was wearing an armor which was a level 19 Inferior Divine Weapon.

When Fang Xingjian's sword slashed down, a wave of backlash surged toward him in the form of gushing tremors. With a slight tremble, his silhouette was already drowning in the streams of milky ways.

However, this was merely for a moment. In the next moment, a total of ten Ether Sword Ripples slashed out at ten times that of supersonic speed, bringing along a series of sparks and slicing through the stars which surrounded him. Fang Xingjian then leaped out and appeared at the borders of the arena.

He lowered his body down in the same way a cheetah would, while the longsword in his hand released high temperatures continuously. His entire body was giving off white steam like he had just came out from a steamer.

Hoult touched his face where he had just been slashed. Then he smiled and said, "Your speed is fast, but against the Astral Tempest's great numbers, there's nothing you can do. Their existence is like the air... No matter how fast and agile you are, there's no way for you to escape from air."

Hearing Hoult's words, Fang Xingjian let out a cold smile and said, "Then... can air fend off against sunlight?"

Before Hoult could react, Fang Xingjian's body flashed, and he disappeared once again.

This time around, he did not dash toward Hoult but was like a satellite, circling around and above Hoult with a ten-meter distance between them.

While he continued to circle around Hoult at an extremely high speed, white sword Qis encompassed the longsword he was

holding, reflecting out streams of light.

Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash was activated! As it reflected sword light and sunlight directly, the light sword, which was at a high temperature of one thousand degrees, attacked Hoult in the face.

A pfft sound could be heard, and Hoult let out a cold grunt. He put his hand on his face and retreated a step backward. It was clear that the Astral Tempest could not keep out the heat completely.

With a lift of his hand, the Astral Tempest on the exterior was already starting to block the light.

However, how fast was Fang Xingjian's speed? His figure continued to flicker as he circled around Hoult, and the speed at which the light sword moved was also instantaneous. There were light swords penetrating through the gaps in the Astral Tempest at almost every moment, continuing to heat up different parts of Hoult's body.

Hoult clapped his hands together hard, and the countless stars covered him up completely, forming a sphere. It was like a precious pearl which contained the endless universe and released starry light.

Looking at the obvious target in front of him, Fang Xingjian stopped in his tracks. As the garments on his torso had already been sliced up into pieces by the high speed air currents, he tore off the tattered top of the Knight attire. Then he contemplated as he looked at the sphere before him.

Fang Xingjian was thinking if he should use this chance to use Terra Ingurgitation.

He would probably only be able to use Terra Ingurgitation once in this battle. Therefore, he would obviously want to look for the best chance to deal a lethal blow on his opponent.

Just as he was thinking of this, Hoult's voice rang out in the air

with the tremors from the sphere.

“Excellent... Fang Xingjian, you’re truly my greatest opponent in this Regional Selection.

“If it’s against you, I’ll finally be able to unleash the full prowess of Crimson Fire.”

In the next moment, streams of crimson flames spread out from the sphere.

If the sphere, which was formed from a myriad of stars, was said to look like an egg, then the tongue of fire snaking out incessantly from the sphere was like something had broken out from the egg.

This was the Killing technique, Snake of Engulfment, specially created by the Astral Ancestor to use together with the level 29 Superior Divine Weapon, Crimson Fire, as well as the Killing technique, Astral Tempest.

A giant snake, which seemed to have been formed from lava, dashed out from the astral sphere.

According to ancient legends, the world was once in chaos. When the giant snake—the creator of the world—broke out from the chaos, the entire world started to take its shape.

However, there would eventually be a day when the giant snake would once again engulf the entire world, and the world would welcome its doom.

The Killing technique created by the Astral Ancestor, Snake of Engulfment, was clearly based on this legend of world creation.

The giant snake was born from the huge egg formed from a myriad of stars, and with the appearance of the huge snake, it continued to absorb the heat in its surroundings. The giant snake’s lava-like body grew increasingly brighter and brighter.

This was a huge snake which absorbed heat incessantly until every living thing in the world perished.

It was just like the legendary world-creating, giant snake, which would eventually engulf the entire world.

Watching on as Hoult performed the Killing technique, the Snake of Engulfment, all four examiners present stood up.

Chapter 245 Duel (Part II)

This move, Snake of Engulfment, seemed to hold an image of world destruction and all living things in this world being engulfed.

Although Hoult's demonstration still seemed slightly immature and was incapable of harming the four examiners, the examiners were people with great insight and could see the charm in this move. There was a faint throbbing reflected in their gazes.

"Great lad!" Luke, the oldest amongst all the examiners, exclaimed. "This is powerful, really powerful. It has both the magnificence of the starry sky as well as the concept of chaos. It also has the image of perishing of all living things and the exchange of ether particles, as well as the incorporation of the rationale of some sorcery and divine arts. It's amazing, really amazing."

Governor Devitt squinted too as he stared at the Snake of Engulfment, which had been born from the stars and continued to sway non-stop. He mumbled, "Looking at this snake will allow one to see the glory which the Astral Ancestor cultivated for many years to obtain. Seems like he still can't get over the ranking from thirty years ago."

Armstrong looked toward the arena as well and said, "None of the Divine level experts have been wasting their time. Let's also be on the ready to make our moves. Otherwise, if they were to carry on like this, at least half the people in the battle coliseum will die."

Although all the spectators, who were below Knight-level, had left, most of the spectators who had remained behind were Knights. From the looks of the Snake of Engulfment, it was clear the tremors from the aftermath of the upcoming battle would not be something ordinary Knights would be able to stand up against.

In the arena, the Snake of Engulfment, which had finally fully

emerged, now faced upward with its mouth open wide. It released hissing sounds which rang out across the entire Regional Academy.

With the Snake of Engulfment at the center, the temperature was decreasing ceaselessly, at a speed which could be seen by the naked eye. Frost was starting to appear on the arena.

On the other hand, although the body of the Snake of Engulfment continued to glow even brighter as it continued to absorb heat, its surface was in fact extremely cold.

This was a weird contradiction. Although it was something which appeared to be scorching hot, it was actually turning increasingly cold.

With a loud cry, the Snake of Engulfment looked to Fang Xingjian and said, “Xingjian, this technique is called the Snake of Engulfment. Although I’m only at level one because it is something that only Conferred Knights can cultivate, it’s still not something that ordinary Knights can withstand against.

“However, I can’t use this technique for very long. That move you used to wipe out Meng Hao can’t be use many times either, right?

“Since we tied in our earlier exchange, it’s clear that we’re very close in terms of techniques, battle prowess and the level of our Killing techniques. If we’re to continue on like this, there’s not much point. Why don’t we both unleash our full powers and decide the victor in a single move?”

Clearly, Hoult had used the Astral Bodies Projectile Killing technique on the Snake of Engulfment as well.

With that, his entire body was wrapped up and protected by the Astral Tempest, and his consciousness had entered into the Snake of Engulfment, ready for the battle.

Fang Xingjian agreed with what Hoult had said. If this were to carry on, even if he could keep up until the time for the Snake of

Engulfment was up, his opponent would also be able to rely on the Astral Tempest to fly and defend himself. Additionally, Hoult would be able to use the Astral Bodies Projectile and other techniques to hold Fang Xingjian off.

Fang Xingjian even guessed that Hoult probably still had the means to combine the Astral Tempest and the Astral Bodies Projectile, which could disguise the fake body, the Astral Tempest had created, as his true body.

Additionally, the most important thing was that there was also a time limit to Fang Xingjian's Boundaries Negation. On the contrary, his opponent's Snake of Engulfment would have a greater damage on the arena and to the surroundings as more time passed.

Therefore, hearing Hoult's proposal, Fang Xingjian nodded and said, "It's true that there's no point for us to continue on like this.

"Since that's the case, let's decide this with a single move.

"Let's see you receiving this sword attack from me."

With that, the Styx in Fang Xingjian's hand was raised up slowly, and streams of sword Qis gushed forth. Those streams of Ether Sword Ripples attached themselves onto the Styx.

This was the new way of using Ether Sword Ripples which Fang Xingjian had come up with. As streams of sword ripples encompassed his sword, an extremely sharp aura was emitted, and it flowed around his body,

With him at the center, cracks started to form on the arena. The cracks came in various forms, as though they were all created from the slashes of a longsword.

A loud explosive boom rang out in the sky. No one knew if it was just a coincidence, but a great crack appeared in the clouds. It was as though a longsword had soared up into the air and torn the cloud layers apart.

Then when the two of them were talking to each other, Devitt and the other three examiners exchanged nods as each of them took their positions in a corner of the arena.

With a move of his palm, Devitt created up to a hundred ice dragons, encompassing the entire arena. The other three examiners then put their hands on the ice dragons, turning them into a thin layer of fog. The powers of the four examiners were absorbed, and the entire arena was shrouded.

Looking at the solemn actions of the four examiners, all the spectators present started to feel nervous too. The spectators in the front rows also started to back off under the protection of their guards. Other than a few Conferred Knights, the rest of the spectators, who were only at Knight-level, had now backed off to the furthest section of the battle coliseum's stands. They looked out toward the arena carefully.

Simultaneously, over four hundred streams of Ether Sword Ripples had covered Fang Xingjian's sword. Next, the level 4 Ether Effulgence Weapon was activated. It was as though even the sword ripples were trembling because of it.

Four hundred streams of sword ripples... If it was said that they represented 1000 times of Fang Xingjian's strength, and that he had an astonishing prowess when combined with the Effulgence Weapon... Then when Fang Xingjian performed the Terra Ingurgitation once again, the whole world changed. It had already exceeded the power the flesh and blood body could reach.

Being put into an environment where they had lost the gravitational forces acting on them for the second time, everyone had an even greater understanding of how horrifying this surge of power was. The entire world seemed to have been flipped over in this instant, and everyone felt as though their lives were not in their own hands.

Countless powerful forces had been mixed together and adhered

onto Fang Xingjian's sword. When he thrust it out forward, there was no one else who cared about air waves, air current explosions, or sound waves.

It was because, at this moment, 99% of the people only felt like they had been placed in darkness and had lost their sense of hearing. They could neither see nor hear, as though the entire world had really collapsed.

The power from this sword attack was so strong that it had robbed people of their five senses. It caused the weak to subconsciously want to protect themselves, forgetting about time and space completely.

Confronted with Fang Xingjian's sword attack, the Snake of Engulfment, controlled by Hoult, suddenly turned extremely bright. However, what absolute light brought forth was absolute darkness. When the body of the Snake of Engulfment shone to its brightest, it was when it was absorbing heat crazily.

The entire Snake of Engulfment, with the image of the perishing and destruction of all living things, charged forth head on toward Fang Xingjian.

Every area it passed by in the arena would freeze up completely, and even the atmosphere was absolutely silent. When anything met the Snake of Engulfment, they entered into a state of eternal darkness and silence.

Chapter 246 Duel (Part III)

Once the longsword in Fang Xingjian's hand got near to the Snake of Engulfment, he sensed that something was wrong. It was because he started to feel cold all over; his heat was being absorbed incessantly.

When his sword pierced into the Snake of Engulfment, this feeling grew stronger than before, and even his speed had started to slow down.

However, the power from the Terra Ingurgitation was truly too brutal. Even though the Snake of Engulfment was absorbing the heat from Fang Xingjian's body incessantly... With the enhancement of the Ether Sword Ripples and the Terra Ingurgitation, the Silver Fox Styx still continued to tear through the entire Snake of Engulfment in under one thousandth of a second.

It then tapped on the giant egg the Astral Tempest had formed.

Streams of waves formed from the trembling force appeared continuously on the surfaces of the Astral Tempest. In the end, this attack caused the entire Astral Tempest to explode, bursting out like a huge egg of chaos.

The Silver Fox Styx in Fang Xingjian's hand tore the streams of stars apart mercilessly and continued on to thrust toward Hoult, who was standing amidst the stars.

However, it seemed as though the longsword in his hand had reached its limits as well. After having channelled the force of the Terra Ingurgitation twice in a day, he then proceeded to slash through the Snake of Engulfment and Astral Tempest. When Fang Xingjian's longsword was about to tear apart Hoult's body, the entire longsword broke into pieces.

However, despite this, the remaining impact from the Terra

Ingurgitation still burst forth, sending Hoult flying. With a bang, Hoult knocked against the ice fog the four examiners had created through combined efforts, then he gradually came to a stop.

With the final push of power, all the trembling in the battle coliseum finally came to a stop. Fortunately, the four examiners had taken measures earlier and thus, were able to block most of the impact from the attacks. It was only the many walls in the battle coliseums which had cracked. Additionally, some students, who were Knights, had dropped to the ground, but fortunately, most of them were uninjured.

The entire arena, which had been encompassed by a layer of icy fog, was now covered with frost, appearing as though there was flour everywhere. Half of Fang Xingjian's body had also become numb, with serious frost bites. Even his internal organs as well as his blood vessels were starting to deteriorate due to having lost a massive amount of heat.

Fang Xingjian immediately sat down on the ground and started cultivating to heal his wounds. He moved his body gradually in order to create heat and heal his wounds.

Hoult spewed out a mouthful of blood and laughed loudly, "To think that your skills are one notch higher than mine. I lost even with Crimson Fire. If your Styx had not shattered at the last moment, I would be dead."

Fang Xingjian said coldly, "You have the Astral Tempest to protect you. Even if my Styx didn't break, it would have only injured you severely at most. It's impossible for it to have killed you."

After that, neither of them spoke another word. Both of them sat down cross-legged on the ground and started to heal their own wounds.

The four examiners brought down the ice fog and looked at Fang Xingjian, who was seated in the arena, and Hoult, who was seated

below the arena. The result of the battle was very clear.

Moreover, they had seen the entire battle earlier.

“How was it?”

“Has Hoult lost?”

“Or did Fang Xingjian lose?”

Chatter started to break out from amidst the stands. The speed of the final attack had been too fast and too strong. 99% of the people present had not been able to see it clearly and, thus, did not know what had happened.

Everyone’s gazes were fixed in the direction of the arena, waiting for the results of this match in great anticipation.

Governor Devitt fell stunned for a short moment, but in the next moment, the great deal of words he had wanted to say turned into a single line.

He said, “Then let me announce that this year’s Regional Champion is Kirst Academy’s Fang Xingjian!”

The battle coliseum fell silent for a moment. Then in next moment, a tremendous amount of sound exploded loudly.

Countless people stood up, cheering, cursing, and shouting as though they were celebrating the birth of this year’s Regional Champion.

Fang Xingjian exhaled and thought to himself, ‘I’ve finally won.’

In this moment, his stamina had been wiped out completely, and he was no longer able to unleash any more techniques like the Terra Ingurgitation or Ether Sword Ripples. Even the Styx, which had only been with him for a couple of days, was now wasted.

However, everything had been worth it—coming up first in the Regional Selection had won him a lot of time.

In the stands, Ferdinand cheered and jumped in joy. With great

joy, he then gave a hug each to Kirst's City Lord, Anthony and Robert!

"I've won! I've won! Hahahaha!"

Thinking of the gold he would be getting his hands on, Ferdinand could not help but break out in laughter.

However, Anthony and Robert both smiled slightly bitterly. They could have won one or two thousand gold but ended up winning only a few hundred gold due to their hesitation. Suddenly, they felt great heartache.

Mongul's City Lord took a long look at Fang Xingjian who was seated cross-legged in the arena. Shaking his head, the City Lord left with his son, David.

Tresia Clan's Adri, the Deputy Commander of the Imperial Guards, looked at Fang Xingjian. There seemed to be countless schemes and plots flashing past his eyes.

Then in the next moment, someone took the lead and clapped, and all the spectators in the entire battle coliseum broke out into applause.

Amidst the applause, which were like sea waves, Manny and Rota walked up into the arena and helped Fang Xingjian down.

The following matches were the placement of the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and other places. However, most of the people present would probably not have the mood to watch the matches anymore.

Devitt and the other three examiners walked up as well. They looked at Fang Xingjian and said, "Go and have a good rest. There's no need for you to be concerned with the remaining matches."

Fang Xingjian nodded and was helped out of the battle coliseum by a few maids. Just then, the sky turned dark, and a black fog surrounded the entire battle coliseum. It was as though a canopy of darkness had covered up the skies, blocking out the sunshine in the sky.

A Conferred Knight appeared above the battle coliseum. He was wearing black clothes and armor, and his head was completely covered up by a black helmet.

Looking at the gazes everyone were casting toward him, he said calmly, “Looks like I’m not too late. Has the Regional Champion from the Great Western Region just been decided?”

Devitt’s gaze turned cold as he said, “Dark Knight? Then has the First Prince come as well?”

“Haha, that’s right.” Pitched black fog started to appear behind the Dark Knight, forming a pitch black silhouette. However, when Fang Xingjian saw this figure, he was stunned. It was the the silhouette of the First Prince, George Krieg.

There were thirty-six clones in the thirty-six contracts in the Hell’s Map, each representing the Ancient Path of Hell’s understanding of the thirty-six types of powers in Hell.

Previously, the First Prince had appeared as flames. This time around, it was darkness.

This First Prince, formed from the black fog, was filled with a feeling of mystery and devastation. It was as though there were sounds of forlorn crying at all times, as though many agonized faces were trying to emerge from his body at any moment.

He swept a glance at the crowd below him, much like a god announcing his decree to the world. Each of his words resonated in the hearts of the people, instilling terror into them.

Despite merely standing there in the air, he seemed to wish for everyone to prostrate themselves in worship and with feels of surrender.

Fang Xingjian thought to himself, ‘That’s so powerful! This clone is much stronger than the fire clone from the other time.’

The First Prince, who was up in the air, said in a calm voice, “His Majesty has agreed to my request to let me be this year’s Royal

Supervisory Officer and supervise the Regional Selection in the eight regions. I was given the right to select elite talents directly and let them enrol in the National Royal Academy. We'll let them grow stronger and then have them do their part to serve the Royal family.

“The reason I've come to the Great Western Region today is to pick out talents from the top ten to bring back to the Imperial Capital with me.”

The First Prince's words caused the entire battle coliseum enter into an uproar. The countenances of Devitt and the other three examiners all turned grim as they look up at the Dark Knight and the First Prince with unwelcoming expressions.

Chapter 247 Imperious

Hearing the First Prince's words, the hearts the four examiners, as well as the hearts of the examinees in the Regional Selection, fell, and their expressions turned grim.

While looking at the First Prince in mid-air, who looked like both a god and a demon, everyone present felt a suffocating feeling. Anxiety, terror, excitement, and even feelings of idolization seeped out. The pressure was so strong that everyone present could not catch their breath.

For the past few years, the First Prince had been oppressing and domineering, and had taken in a variety of geniuses. He had even eradicated quite a number of factions and killed many high ranking officials from the Empire, causing the entire upper echelon of the Empire to be on tenterhooks.

Moreover, the First Prince was the future successor of the Empire. Having spread out his influence across the world, his existence in the empire was second only to the King.

Everyone was very clear on the First Prince's motives; he wanted to bring all thirty-six sections of the Hell's Map to the greatest level ever attained.

What level would that be? It would require all thirty-six contractors to be peerless Conferred Knights, who were all at level 29.

What kind of powers would thirty-six second transition Conferred Knights at the pinnacle have? There were only over five thousand Conferred Knight in the whole Empire, and out of them, there would not be more than one hundred of them who would be able to reach level 29.

For the First Prince to wish to take in thirty-six top notch Conferred Knights, it meant he wanted to take in one-third of the

top experts in the Empire under him. How could this be possible?

Each level 29 Conferred Knight was supported by a tremendous force, which would be either a faction, group, or political party.

Take for example, the eight Governors of the eight regions. How could they possibly be people whom the First Prince could take in so easily and then have them sign on the Devil's Note, placing them forever under his control?

Therefore, what the First Prince did instead was collect geniuses who had the potential to attain level 29.

However, even this was difficult. Since the creation of the Ancient Path of Hell, the legendary creator Adam had been the only one who succeeded in this.

Anyone who knew of the First Prince's motives would be astonished by his great plans.

However, after the initial astonishment, there would be even more overwhelming pressure. It was because if the First Prince really succeeded in this attempt, in the future, there would probably be no room for other forces, groups or factions to survive within the Empire. The world would be controlled solely by the First Prince.

Additionally, along with the First Prince's appearance and words, everyone felt an overwhelming aura surging forth.

The abilities of each of the thirty-six clones from hell would be tightly connected to each of their contractors. It was just like how the Dark Knight in the sky had the powers of a top notch second transition level 29 Conferred Knight, giving the First Prince's clone an even stronger aura. Just its appearance alone had already given the others so much pressure that no one could raise their heads.

Its absolute, domineering powers were displayed fully.

Everyone exclaimed in their hearts. If the First Prince were to really cultivate all thirty-six Hell's Maps, what astonishing powers

would he have if all thirty-six clones and his true body were then gathered together?

However, regardless, 99% of the examinees present today probably would not wish to be taken in under the First Prince as a puppet.

Governor Devitt was the first to step out. Looking at the First Prince in mid-air, he said with an unfriendly expression, “Prince George, with regards to the Royal Supervisory Officer you mentioned, I don’t seem to have heard any news about it.”

“Of course you haven’t.” George Krieg smiled. “It’s because His Majesty finally agreed to my request just three days ago. I’ve been rushing to the various locations where the Regional Selections are being held. The Great Western Region is already my third stop.”

Devitt frowned deeply, not showing any respect as he said, “Do you have any proof?”

George Krieg let out a cold laugh, seemingly unconcerned toward the Governor’s lack of respect. After all, he had long since known Devitt had joined his younger brother. So, why would Devitt listen to him, the First Prince?

Moreover, he was long prepared for this and tossed out a metallic scroll to Devitt.

Devitt caught it and saw its contents.

These scrolls, which were forged specially from alloy, held the King’s secret decree. They were confidential documents, each with unique ciphertext, codes, and labels, put into writing and stored in the Archives of the respective regions.

It could be said that each of the King’s decrees was one of a kind. There would be orders written on it, and it would be useless after one use.

Moreover, just the alloy material used and the method of creating the scroll alone were state secrets.

If one were to forge the King's decree, he might be able to be able to pull it off in front of low ranked officials, but before Prefectural and Regional Officials, the lie would be easy to expose.

Devitt cast a glance over the contents and had confirmed it was likely that this was real. Moreover, with the First Prince's status, he had no need to forge documents.

However, this made him felt even more dismal.

Lifting his head to look at the smiling First Prince, Devitt could not help but think to himself, 'Your Majesty, what on earth are you thinking? If such orders were to be conveyed down...'

However, the King's orders were absolute. No matter how unwilling Devitt was, there was no way he could defy the orders with so many eyes watching him.

Therefore, he cupped his hands together and said, "I wonder how your Highness wishes to give guidance to the Regional Selection's arrangements?"

"Forget about the guidance." The First Prince sat on a throne formed from the black fog in mid-air. This made him appear even more domineering and tyrannical, as though he was Hades from Hell.

He spoke, "All four of the seniors here are the pillars of the Great Western Region. I will obviously not have any issues with the Regional Selection you have planned.

"But as I said earlier, in these precarious times, this country needs to strengthen its powers, and we need even more stronger Conferred Knights. Therefore, I've come specially to select Knights who have shown outstanding performances in the Regional Selection and will be sending them directly to the National Royal Academy to continue their studies.

"You guys must cherish this chance. To be able to skip the Regional Royal Academy and join the central forces... This is not

something that everyone can do.

“Since the founding of the Empire, there have only been one or two of such chances which were bestowed by the heavens.”

Governor Devitt laughed coldly to himself. Such a means of substituting one thing for another surreptitiously were too obvious. While the First Prince claimed they would be able to enter the National Academy directly, when the time came, their status, allocations and arrangements would still be decided by the First Prince himself.

Although it appeared as though they would come under the National Academy, they would in fact become the First Prince’s private forces.

As Devitt thought these things to himself, he tried to delay some time and said, “Since that’s the case, I would like to request for your Highness to wait for another day. After the...”

“The matches can continue after I’m gone.” The First Prince interrupted Devitt overbearingly and commanded, “Since the talents I’m picking out are not based on their final results, I’ll bring them with me first, and you guys can continue the matches.”

Governor Devitt knew he must not back off at this point. So, he straightened his posture and said, “Your Highness, the Regional Selection is a regulation which has been implemented since the founding of the Empire. For the past two hundred years, even back when we were at war with the Sand Country in the east or with the three countries in the north, it has not been stopped. Your Highness wishes to be the first to do so?”

Chapter 248 Domineering

The First Prince looked at Devitt and let out several cold laughs. Then he turned his gaze to Fang Xingjian and said, “Since you’d like to continue, just go ahead. However, since the Regional Champion has already been decided, I’ll bring Fang Xingjian with me first. As for the rest, I’ll come for them after their rankings have been decided. It won’t be too late then.”

In fact, the First Prince had never thought of stopping the Regional Selection before. In fact, he he had only suddenly received the news of Fang Xingjian’s astonishing performances for the past few days and thus rushed over immediately. The First Prince wanted to subdue Fang Xingjian before he became a Conferred Knight and entered the Regional Academy.

Otherwise, if the First Prince took action after Fang Xingjian had already gained the identity of a Conferred Knight and entered the Regional Academy, it would be more troublesome.

Regional Academies had their own autonomy, and even a prince would not be able to take action against them so easily. Moreover, after Fang Xingjian undergoes the second transition, his abilities would suddenly increase in leaps and bounds.

When Fang Xingjian heard the First Prince’s words, he lifted his head with his eyes closed. It was as though he was really looking at the First Prince.

Fang Xingjian pushed aside the person who was supporting him and turned his head in the direction the First Prince’s voice was coming from. He asked suddenly, “George, what if I’m not willing to go?”

When the First Prince heard Fang Xingjian calling out his name directly, he immediately felt displeased.

“How dare you! Is His Highness’ name something you can call?!”

The Dark Knight observing the situation immediately let out a cold snort, and the Dark Heavenly Canopy in the sky pressed downward, as though charging toward Fang Xingjian.

However, streams of ice dragons were already soaring and propping up against the dark canopy.

Governor Devitt said, “With the high status Your Highness has, why do you need to make things difficult for a mere Knight?”

The First Prince shot a glance at Fang Xingjian. He did not care about what Fang Xingjian had said. With his identity as the First Prince, no matter how talented Fang Xingjian was, what right did Fang Xingjian have to talk about regulations and conditions with him?

The First Prince gave a direct order, “Bring Fang Xingjian to me.” He could not be bothered talking about conditions and reasonings.

However, under the dark canopy, another three people appeared next to Devitt.

A hint of fury flashed in the First Prince’s eyes, and his tone grew increasingly cold, “Are the few of you planning to defy the King’s orders as well?”

Devitt said calmly, “His Majesty has only said that you may select elites to be promoted directly, but he didn’t say that you can ignore the Knights’ wishes, right? Since Fang Xingjian doesn’t wish to go and would like instead to remain at the Regional Academy, then as the Headmaster, I will naturally need to stand up for him.”

The First Prince said coldly, “Fang Xingjian has yet to enter the Regional Academy and hasn’t even gone through the second transition. He can’t even be considered a real Conferred Knight yet.”

Devitt said, “Fang Xingjian is the Regional Champion and has also attained Heaven’s Perception... Becoming a Conferred Knight and entering the Regional Academy is just the natural flow of

things. Isn't the First Prince aware of this?"

The First Prince did not speak, but the black fog shrouding his body grew increasingly darker as though it had brought along the darkness from hell itself.

At this moment, everyone was looking at the First Prince's clone while thinking of the words, 'deep and unfathomable like the ocean'.

The Dark Knight next to the First Prince's clone was the National Champion from two selections ago, and he was now a top notch level 29 Conferred Knight. He was one who had the ability to fight against the Governor or someone who was even stronger.

With such a person present and the First Prince's clone by his side, supporting him, once they started fighting—putting Governor Devitt and the other three examiners aside—it would even be considered a disaster for the spectators present as well as the entire Regional Academy.

As the First Prince's aura increased rapidly unceasingly, the pressure from the Dark Heavenly Canopy seemed to have gotten increasingly stronger. Many people present could not help but hunch their backs, incapable of continuing to look up at the First Prince.

Just then, Fang Xingjian stood upright, the mental cultivation method in his brain circulating fanatically. His body was releasing collision sounds of kacha kacha all over.

He stood up forcibly against the pressure induced by the First Prince and the Dark Knight, and said out loud in a clear voice, "George, let me ask you this. Now that I've emerged as the victor in the Regional Selection's arena battle, I'm naturally the Regional Champion and a Conferred Knight. Entering the Regional Academy is a regulation which has been set down since the founding of the Empire. What wrong have I done by choosing not to leave with you and join the National Academy?"

Each of Fang Xingjian's words sounded like they had collided against a large bell, resounding from his body and entering clearly into the ears of everyone present.

After hearing his words, most of the people present turned pale. They could not even begin to imagine that someone would dare speak to the First Prince like this.

“Is he crazy? How dare he talk to the First Prince like this?”

“Is this Fang Xingjian tired of living?”

“To think that a level 19 Knight would dare to be so disrespectful before a top notch level 29 expert...?”

Even when Luke and Yaris, who were examiners, the Imperial Guards' Deputy Commander Adri, Mongul's City Lord, and Kirst's City Lord heard Fang Xingjian's words, they started to break out in cold sweat.

What kind of a person was the First Prince? He was this generation's strongest inheritor of the Ancient Path of Hell, the future King and a Conferred Knight who was extremely close to attaining the Divine level. Even a level 29 Conferred Knight would tremble in fear before him and would be extremely wary. To think that Fang Xingjian dared to rebut him head-on... He was truly too audacious.

Governor Devitt and the others started to feel anxious and secretly strengthened the guards, afraid the First Prince would blow up suddenly and start killing.

“Oh?” A simple word was spoken, giving everyone goosebumps.

The First Prince lowered his head and finally looked at Fang Xingjian. It was as though he had not expected Fang Xingjian to still be able to go against him under such pressure.

However, thinking of Fang Xingjian's earlier performance, everything made sense. This Fang Xingjian was truly not one who would bow down to royalty and was hard to control. The First

Prince opened his mouth slightly, and an extremely domineering aura spread out and surged downward.

“Fang Xingjian, you’re merely a Knight. To think that you dare to talk to me about regulations? I’m the Empire’s First Prince and the future King, a level 29 Conferred Knight and an expert who will be able to reach the Divine level anytime now.

“The whole country is under my control. My name brings awe and fear to even the most desolate areas, and I have countless experts as my subordinates... You think you’re worthy of talking to me about regulations?

“Since I’m here today, the regulations of the Regional Selection will naturally be decided by me.”

In this moment, the First Prince finally decided not to play the hypocrite with every semblance of sincerity and instead revealed his stand openly. Relying on absolute power, he suppressed over everything. He was regulation itself.

Hearing his words, the four examiners, with Devitt in the lead, all wore pale countenances, as though they had not expected the First Prince to shed all pretences.

However, what they first felt was not fury but horror.

“Although the First Prince has been domineering in the past, he has never been so arrogant. Now that he dares to act so brazenly, could it be... could it be that he’s about to enter that stage?”

“I heard he had participated in the Church of Universal Truth’s War of the Eight Princes. I wonder what great benefit he has gained?”

Just then, all four examiners felt a tremendous pressure surging toward them.

Chapter 249 Second Prince

Faced with the First Prince's extremely arrogant words, Fang Xingjian straightened his back as though he was not facing any pressure.

“The Regional Selection is a national regulation under the King's orders. By saying this, are you trying to say that you want to surpass the King and overstep the boundaries of your own authorities?”

Hearing Fang Xingjian's words, the First Prince looked at him and laughed coldly, as though he was looking at a clown.

Stretching out his hands, the Dark Heavenly Canopy pressed downward again.

“Fang Xingjian, let me tell you today... Before absolute power, things like reasonings, regulations and justice... they're nothing but crap. When absolute power breaks through, it naturally becomes the regulation.”

A surge of very strong and dark power descended, as though it was bringing down the entire stretch of sky.

However, at this moment, a surge of power of great majesty came down like an extremely Yang gust of wind, dissipating the large spread of darkness.

This majestic and strong power was like the sun in the sky, omnipresent and extremely vigorous yet nourishing, bringing about the feeling of the spring breeze.

“Eldest Brother, please stop there.”

A voice rang out together with this force of power, astonishing the crowd once again.

Governor Devitt thought to himself, ‘It's the Second Prince's Thoughts Across A Thousand Li. His thoughts have transcended

through space.

Hearing the Second Prince's thoughts, a light flashed past the First Prince's eyes, and he said, "Oh? Second Brother, even you are here to stop me?"

"The Regional Selection has been set up since the founding of the Empire to uncover and nurture talents in order to strengthen the Empire.

"The mastery of Eldest Brother's cultivation is gradually heading toward perfection. Moreover, although you have not attained all thirty-six Hell's Maps, you're close to attaining the Divine level. So, why do you need to make it hard for a mere Knight?"

Hearing that the person speaking was the Second Prince, everyone was shocked. However, the messages in the Second Prince's words made everyone feel even more astonished.

"The First Prince is about to attain the Divine level despite not having cultivated all thirty-six Hell's Maps?"

"Divine level... divine level... His Majesty has said before that once the First Prince steps into the Divine level, he will travel the world and pass all the matters of the country to the First Prince."

"I see... This time around, His Majesty has let the First Prince take the role of Royal Supervisory Officer in order to let him remove all opposing forces and increase his influence. This will in turn allow him to be further distinguished from the other princes."

"His Majesty has completely made up his mind and chosen the First Prince."

Almost everyone was astonished by the Second Prince's words. It was now certain that the First Prince was the successor to the throne, and he might even become the Empire's eleventh Divine level expert and rule the world. The Second Prince's words had even hinted a sign of inferiority to the First Prince.

Then after hearing the Second Prince's words, the First Prince also fell silent for a while before saying calmly, "Second Brother, the reason you're saying this is because you hope that I can let Fang Xingjian off?"

The Second Prince's voice rang out again, "With Eldest Brother's cultivation, you should be able to reach the Divine level in at most another year, right? With your powers, your sight should be set across the entire world. Your real opponents should be the three Mage Kings, the countries in the north, and the Sand Country in the west.

"If you manage to step into Divine level a year later, I'll naturally go all out to help you. Why do you need to insist on holding onto a mere Knight?"

"Hmph." Hearing the Second Prince's words, the First Prince was overjoyed and said, "Since Second Brother has said so, I will naturally not mind letting go of a Knight. Within a year, I'll definitely attain the Divine level. I hope that when the time comes, you will not make the wrong decision and disappoint me."

The Second Prince said calmly, "If Eldest Brother were to step into the Divine level within a year, I'll naturally do my part for the Empire and follow in your lead."

In the next moment, the First Prince stood up abruptly, releasing a gust of sharp aura in all directions. Puffs of black fog soared up, as though forcing out streams of black spatial gaps.

"Since that's the case, Fang Xingjian, I'll forgive your act of disrespect today. However, while I can let you off on Second Brother's account, I can't possibly leave without bringing anyone with me."

With that, he grabbed out with his hand. It was like the world had turned completely dark, and everything was sucked into his hand.

Under this tremendous suction, Wei Leng, who was at the side, was grabbed by the First Prince and turned into three black lines together with the Dark Knight before disappearing.

The First Prince had wanted to grab Anderson but realized that this guy was extremely quick-witted. He had long since hid behind the four examiners, unlike how Wei Leng was still standing foolishly outside the arena. The First Prince could only throw a long look at Anderson and let this go before taking Wei Leng with him.

At the same time, the First Prince's arrogant voice came from afar, "I'll be bringing this Wei Leng with me. As for the rest of the processes in the Regional Selection, you can do as you wish."

The First Prince had decided to let Fang Xingjian off after the Second Prince showed signs of inferiority. However, under everyone's gazes, he still took an examinee away with him while ignoring the Regional Selection and the Governor. Despite this, no one present could do anything to him.

It was because the news, that the First Prince was about to step into Divine level, was far too astonishing. Even though he was also at level 29, aside from Divine level experts, there was no one else capable of being his opponent.

However, even though he was domineering, his actions had built up a lot of influence for himself. The First Prince had left an indestructible impression in the minds of all the aristocrats in the entire Great Western Region.

After this incident, there would be countless people submitting to him.

Looking at the First Prince's departure, murderous intent filled Fang Xingjian's eyes. Based on his true character, a person like the First Prince was one he had to kill. However, his abilities were far from a match for the First Prince, and he was also in a weakened state after the earlier battle. At present, Fang Xingjian was

incapable of unleashing even a single Ether Sword Ripple.

He thought to himself, ‘George Krieg, you mentioned that you’ll be able to step into Divine level within a year. Then, within this year, I must transcend beyond Divine level and kill you a year later, before returning to Divine level and eradicating Caroline and the entire Onassis Clan. I’ll also suppress Li Shuanghua and force the truth of my origins out from her.’

Once again, he experienced being suppressed by powerful forces, and once again, Fang Xingjian craved for more power.

However, he was very confident in his own talent. Fang Xingjian believed he would be able to make a series of breakthroughs by cultivating in the Regional Academy for a year. He would surpass the First Prince and then surpass the Divine level.

Only when he has great power, would he be able to follow his true heart and eradicate his external demons and live a carefree life. This was the foundation of his future cultivation.

Just then, a voice once again rang out next to Fang Xingjian’s ears, “Xingjian, I’m the Second Prince. Come out from the battle coliseum. Let’s meet up.”

Hearing that, Fang Xingjian was stunned for a moment, then he left the battle coliseum alone.

Behind him, although the final arena battles in the Regional Selection continued on in the battle coliseum, after the incident with the First Prince, the remaining arena battles were like a joke. Everyone’s attention was no longer on the arena.

“The First Prince is truly blessed by the heavens. Having attained a power at his level, he can already ignore all regulations and suppress everyone.”

“This time around, Fang Xingjian is truly unlucky to have offended the First Prince. I wonder what decision he will make one year later?”

“The First Prince will attain the Divine level within a year. By then, aside from showing submission, what else can Fang Xingjian do? The First Prince is truly amazing. Didn’t you see that earlier? Even the Second Prince bowed down to him. What can a mere Knight like Fang Xingjian do?”

Adri stood in the stands, looking at Fang Xingjian’s departing back view while laughing coldly in heart.

‘Hmph. Since His Highness has stepped out in person, one year later, you’ll definitely become a puppet on a Hell’s Map, and I won’t have to take any action. When the time comes, I’ll see how you’ll strive to live while in utter misery as a complete slave to His Highness.’

As the Deputy Commander of the Imperial Guards, Adri was very clear on how horrifying the Hell’s Maps were. After signing the Devil’s Note, in appearance, it would seem as though he had received countless benefits and that his powers would improve rapidly, in leaps and bounds.

However, the truth was that he would not be able to decide on his own life and death. Everything in his life would be controlled by someone’s thoughts, and it would be extremely agonizing. Adri anticipated being able to enjoy Fang Xingjian’s agony when the moment arrived.

Chapter 250 Moon

Although Fang Xingjian had expended a great deal of stamina, his attributes did, after all, far surpass those attributes of ordinary people. Each step he took could still allow him to cross a distance of over ten meters consecutively.

Under the instructions of the voice ringing to his ears, he had already arrived at the back of an old and battered building within a few minutes.

Behind the building, a middle-aged lady was waiting there. The lady wore the clothes of a maid and had ordinary an appearance, just like any random old woman one would see on the streets.

Fang Xingjian ‘looked’ at the middle-aged maid and asked doubtfully, “Second Prince?”

The maid smiled and said, “I’m only borrowing her body temporarily. My Killing technique, Thoughts Across A Thousand Li, can allow one’s consciousness to jump continuously between different physical bodies across a very far distance. Therefore, I’ve also been to many places.”

As he listened to the Second Prince speak, there was still doubt reflected in Fang Xingjian’s eyes because of what the Second Prince had done today.

His actions could be said to have had the intention of protecting Fang Xingjian. If news were to spread that the Second Prince had showed signs of inferiority toward the First Prince, he would lose a lot of his influence. It could even be said that he had completely bowed down to the First Prince. As long as the First Prince attained the Divine level, he would submit to him completely.

As though he had seen the doubt in Fang Xingjian’s eyes, the maid walked up slowly to Fang Xingjian. She stared at his face and said, “How is it? Are you still used to staying in Miracle World?”

What a shock!

Killing intent gushed out from Fang Xingjian's body, and his heart throbbed as though he had not expected his greatest secret to come out so casually from the the maid.

However, the middle-aged maid was exuding a great gentle aura of enlightenment, nourishment, broad profoundness, and nothingness, slowly nullifying Fang Xingjian's killing intent.

"Don't be nervous, I mean no harm toward you," The middle-aged maid smiled, reaching out her hand and stroking Fang Xingjian's face.

"I know your mother." The maid's gaze seemed to reflect that she was recalling on old memories as she sighed and said, "When I saw your face, I figured out your identity immediately because you're too much like her."

Fang Xingjian recalled that his second uncle, Fang Yuehe, seemed to have said something similar. He did not know that the Holy Orison's first disciple, Yuelun, had also said that he looked like someone. Otherwise, he would be even more suspicious of his origins.

Fang Xingjian could not help but ask, "Do you know my mother?"

The middle-aged maid smiled. "I've said that I've been to many places through Thoughts Across A Thousand Li. Of course, I've also been to Earth before."

"She... What kind of person was she?"

Hearing Fang Xingjian's question, the middle-aged maid seemed to have thought of something interesting as she suddenly broke into a smile. She looked at Fang Xingjian and said, "She was the most confident and most talented lady I've ever met in my life."

The Second Prince seemed to be starting to recall the past, and his pupils dilated slightly, as though many memories were flashing

past in his eyes.

“She was just like a daughter who was adored by heavens—the fairy blessed by all the gods.

“No matter what it was, she would be able to understand with just one look, and pick it up upon learning. I remember back when I was learning magic prints together with her, she used to always say, ‘This is too simple, is there anything harder?’”

Fang Xingjian was stunned for a moment. “You’ve learnt magic prints before?”

“You people have been trying to study our Knights’ path. So, of course, I’ve also tried learning your magic prints.” The middle-aged maid smiled, looked at Fang Xingjian with a gentle expression and said, “Your mother was the greater expert in magic prints. On the day she turned sixteen, she completed the second transition and started training in Miracle World.”

Fang Xingjian asked, “Then do you know who my father was?”

“I... I don’t know.” A hint of sadness flashed past the maid’s expression before she said calmly, “After your mother came to the Empire, she spent a month’s time with me touring around the Empire. After she came to Miracle World, it was as though something was bothering her. However, no matter how much I tried to probe, she wouldn’t say.

“It was also during this time that her magic prints started to advance in leaps and bounds. In merely one month, she already had powers comparable to that of a level 25 Conferred Knight.

“However, she grew increasingly unhappy. Every night, she would look toward the north, as if there was something out there, waiting to be accomplished by her.”

A hint of shock flashed past Fang Xingjian’s heart. To have completed the second transition at sixteen years old and gained powers comparable to a level 25 Conferred Knight in a month...

Such progress speed was simply terrifying.

Second Prince was still recalling his memories.

“Finally, on the third day in the Imperial Capital, she left without saying goodbye. She left behind a letter which said she was going to head to the north and look for her meaning in life.

“I wanted to look for her. However, my battle with Eldest Brother turned intense, and I had to remain stationed in the Imperial Capital. So, I sent many subordinates after her, hoping that they would be able to protect her and help her.”

Fang Xingjian asked, “What happened later? Where on earth did she go?”

“I don’t know.” The maid sighed and said, “The Kingdom of Mages in the south, Sand Country, our Empire, as well as the three countries in the north, make up the strongest six countries across all the lands in this world.

“However, the three countries in the north and the hundred small countries under them have always been under the rule of the Church of Universal Truth, where the Empire’s powers couldn’t reach.

“Moreover, seventeen years ago, the previous Pope of the Church disappeared mysteriously. The three major countries in the north went out of control, and there was a great battle which lasted ten years. This made it even harder for us to locate your mother.

“When I received news once again, she was already...”

At the end, the middle-aged maid let out a soft sigh.

Fang Xingjian asked, “Did she die in my... Did she die in Li Shuanghua’s hands?”

“I didn’t see it for myself. However, back then, that was how the rumors went. With your grandmother’s character, it’s highly likely to be true.” The Second Prince patted Fang Xingjian on the

shoulder, and as though he was a senior who had been through many things in life, he said, “Xingjian, your talent is as dazzling as your mom’s. That’s why I want to help you, to let you be able to fully display the potential within you.

“After you’ve entered the Regional Academy, work hard. Don’t worry about Eldest Brother. No matter what, he is still my brother. As long as I’m more submissive toward him, he won’t really be too harsh on me.”

Fang Xingjian did not really agree with the Second Prince’s words. Firstly, the fact that he had reached his level today was totally of no relevance to his mother as he had not inherited her talent.

Moreover, in the fight for the throne, were there only be a few cases of father and son turning their backs on each other or brothers killing amongst themselves? Fang Xingjian held no hopes in him, especially because the First Prince was a person who would kill those who defied him.

However, the Second Prince seemed as though he had not seen through all these. He handed a small booklet to Fang Xingjian and said, “This is the secret manual I had written down based on my memories. It records the fruit of one of your mother’s studies.

“It’s a profound theory, creating mystical prints from the combination of magic prints and ether particles. It can increase your cultivation speed during the phase of your second transition. Take it and practice it well.”

With that, the maid’s gaze blurred out, and the Second Prince’s voice once again rang out from afar.

“From now on, just focus on your training. If you have any problems, you can look for Governor Devitt. He’s my trusty aide and will definitely help you.

“One more thing. Your mother once said this...

“Don’t ever cultivate magic prints.

“Absolutely don’t accept the evil gods’ powers.”

Chapter 251 Mystical Prints

The Second Prince's voice seemed like it was still resounding next to his ears. However, the middle-aged maid's gaze had regained its clarity, and she was now looking at Fang Xingjian with a stunned expression.

Fang Xingjian cast a glance toward her before leaving immediately.

The Second Prince's final words continued to repeat in his mind.

'Don't cultivate magic prints?

'Hmph, I came to Miracle World without even completing my first transition. When have I ever learned magic prints?'

Looking at the booklet in his hands, Fang Xingjian then kept it before heading for the examinees' dormitory.

He sat down cross-legged and started healing his wounds.

Although he craved dearly for power, he was also extremely curious about the booklet the Second Prince had handed to him. However, his stamina had been depleted, and he was injured. What was most important to him now was clearly to heal his injuries. Only thereafter would he be able to truly start his cultivation.

Just like that, the last day of the arena battle ended. Fang Xingjian had become this year's Regional Champion with Hoult ranked second and Anderson ranked third. However, their limelight had been completely covered up due to the First Prince. The most discussed topic in the entire Great Western City was still the news that the First Prince was about to attain the Divine level.

Currently in the dormitory, Fang Xingjian was the only one remaining. His furrowed brows started to relax as he let out a breath. He had finally healed all his internal and external injuries. However, his vital energy and blood had been sapped, so he would need to have a great meal to replenish them.

There was, of course, no problem for him to deal with this issue in the Regional Academy. Although he was not yet a Conferred Knight, Fang Xingjian was already this year's Regional Champion.

So, he called for a maid and gave some instructions. Twenty minutes later, a table of food was delivered to Fang Xingjian. He was in no mood to appreciate any good food and simply finished them in great bites. After circulating the forces in his organs and replenishing his vital energy and blood, Fang Xingjian flipped open the booklet and started reading the contents within.

The whole booklet described how various materials, such as medicine, the blood of ferocious beasts, and metallic powder, could be used to engrave a special type of prints onto one's body. These prints were called mystical prints.

Mystical prints did not allow one to receive power from the evil gods, like with the magic prints but from ether particles instead.

Fang Xingjian was aware that after a Knight had completed the second transition and become a Conferred Knight, exchanging information with ether particles and sensing the external environment were not all they would need to do. They would also need to exchange powers with ether particles in order to borrow tremendous powers from the heavens and earth and thus be able to unleash various powerful Killing techniques.

Moreover, the use of mystical prints was a method which provided support to the exchange with the ether particles. It could strengthen the cultivator's cultivating speed by many times over.

After reading through the entire booklet on the cultivation method for the mystical prints, Fang Xingjian let out a long breath. He had exceptional sword art skills and would be able to make great accomplishments in any sword arts with just a single step. The only area he was lacking in was his cultivation with ether particles. Now that he had the mystical prints, things were much easier now. He would have even greater confidence in the future

when he would go up against the First Prince and when he would suppress Li Shuanghua.

‘However, the mystical prints are split into ten levels. Each additional level will improve one’s ability to exchange powers with ether particles to be two times the efficiency. However, the price for the materials required each time will be increasingly higher. If I wish to complete the cultivation for the mystical prints, I’ll need to rake in a large sum of money.

‘Moreover, although the cultivation of these mystical prints depletes a tremendous amount of wealth, considering the amount of efficiency it provides, any Conferred Knight would fight for it frantically. Before I become truly powerful, I must not reveal this to anyone.’

He thought through everything and kept the booklet. The cultivation of the mystical prints was not something which could be accomplished in a day or two. Fang Xingjian estimated that just the first level of the cultivation would cost him over one hundred thousand gold. This was comparable to half a year’s budget for a Prefectural Academy. He still needed to think of a way to earn a large sum of money before he could start cultivating the mystical prints.

However, with mystical prints, he would be able to increase the progress rate of his ether synchronization.

At the current moment, he was unaffected by this, and layers of silver fog started to flow out from his palms, allowing him to continue his cultivation.

From there, Fang Xingjian ignored the various matters concerning the Regional Academy. Regardless of whether there were any balls, celebration parties, meet-ups or private gatherings, he rejected them all. He once again sank deep into cultivation, quietly waiting to enter the Regional Academy as he started cultivating.

Three days later, he was informed by a maid and led to the Headmaster's office in the Regional Academy. Rota, Manny, Hoult, and Anderson had long since been waiting there. It seemed that the Regional Academy's Headmaster, Governor Devitt, had yet to arrive.

Rota and Manny waved at Fang Xingjian. Rota had turned out in sixth place, and Manny had come out eighth because of Wei Leng's departure.

Anderson propped up his legs and sat on the couch without a care for his image.

When Hoult saw Fang Xingjian, he followed Fang Xingjian over. The Crimson Fire longsword was attached at his waist, and he wore a set of formal attire which aristocrats wore, seeming to exude the luxurious aura of those in the upper class.

Hoult sat next to Fang Xingjian and said calmly, "I've asked my teacher. First Prince was already extremely close to attaining Divine level to begin with.

"And over at the Church of Universal Truth, he managed to snatch a set of Divine level expert's remains. Then he performed the Hell's Transmigration Technique from the Ancient Path of Hell and absorbed the Divine remains into his own body. He was already one step into attaining Divine level then. With his great talent, he will probably really be able to truly attain Divine level within a year.

"By then, in order to completely master all thirty-six Hell's Maps, he will probably still come looking for you."

Taken under the wings of a Divine level expert, Hoult was naturally unconcerned that the First Prince would lay his hands on him. However, Fang Xingjian was in great danger. After reminding Fang Xingjian of this, Hoult gave him a pat on the shoulder and left.

Rota frowned and said, “Why is the First Prince so obsessed with the thirty-six Hell’s Maps? If he has cultivated and reached the Divine level, he shouldn’t be bothered with how many top notch Knights he has under him, right?”

Manny shook his head and said, “It’s not like that. It was said that the founder of the Ancient Path of Hell, Adam, was the only person who had successfully cultivated all thirty-six Hell’s Maps successfully.

“And there were also some rumors in history that those who transcended the Divine level had lifespans that surpassed human limits.

“It was said that after Adam was buried, someone had opened his coffin secretly, only to discover that his corpse was missing.

“The faction, which cultivated the Ancient Path of Hell, thought that someone had stolen the corpse but ended up not finding anything.

“However, in the decades and hundreds of years which followed, there have been occasional rumors that Adam had been seen.”

“I know.” Rota nodded and said, “It was said that there were some people who looked like him. There were also stories about people who didn’t grow old even after ten years or decades had passed. Aren’t they all groundless hearsays? Why would the First Prince believe in them?”

Manny shrugged and said, “For someone at the First Prince’s level, they would rather believe it to be true than not.”

Just then, Anderson spoke coldly from the side, “If this guy dares to force me, even if I can’t kill him, I’ll assassinate his subordinates one by one.”

The ten Knights, who had advanced past the Regional Selection, all fell into a daze at this. Fang Xingjian alone remained expressionless. Everyone else seemed to have been shocked by

Anderson's impudence.

Anderson looked at First Prince and said, "Fang Xingjian, don't think that you're the only one who would dare to go against the First Prince. If he were to ask me the same thing during the arena battle, I'll definitely give a reply that's ten times stronger."

Manny grinned and said helplessly, "Who's trying to compare with you about this?"

A few minutes later, Headmaster Devitt finally arrived at the office. Upon entering, he got straight to the point, "The Regional Selection is over. The reason I've called all of you today is to go through the procedures for your enrolment into the Regional Academy. Additionally, it is to make good on the promise about the prizes to be given to the top ten of the Regional Selection."

Hearing the Headmaster's words, everyone's eyes lit up.

Chapter 252 Choice

Ripples formed in Fang Xingjian's heart. This year's Regional Champion could receive an entire set of level 29 Superior Divine Armor.

With just a level 29 Superior Divine Weapon, Crimson Fire, Hoult had been capable of unleashing the prowess of a Conferred Knight when he had been just a Knight. How powerful would a level 29 armor be?

The Headmaster nodded toward everyone. "In a while, someone will take you to pick out your Superior Divine Weapons and the Killing techniques which were secretly passed down by the royalty. From now onward, you are all students of the Great Western Region Regional Academy. I won't say much, but you must know that the Regional Academy will not be providing all this to you for nothing. If you're unable to attain Heaven's Perception and complete the second transition within three years, you'll be requested to leave the academy. Don't say that I didn't warn you."

Hearing the Headmaster's words, everyone understood. They knew that the Headmaster was not trying to scare them. However, although they had passed the Regional Selection, they had only gained the rights to be nurtured by the Regional Academy and the opportunity to attempt becoming a Conferred Knight. This did not mean they would definitely be able to become a Conferred Knight.

There had been countless people in the course of history who passed the Regional Selection but had not been able to attain Heaven's Perception after three years of hard work. They were then requested to leave the Regional Academy.

The examinees, who had been basking in happiness earlier, now felt an immense amount of pressure. The end of the Regional Selection marked not the beginning of a new life but the start of an even more important and persistent competition.

However, Fang Xingjian felt no pressure. He had already attained Heaven's Perception, and once he was fully prepared, he would be able to start leveling up and go through the second transition in the Regional Academy.

Hoult, Anderson, Rota, and Manny were all very confident since they had received the gift from the Melancholic Monarch and now had a hint of inspiration toward attaining Heaven's Perception. They were brimming in confidence that they would be able to complete the second transition within the next three years.

“Alright, you guys may leave now. Someone outside will attend to you. Fang Xingjian, you stay behind.”

Amidst everyone's jealous or worried gazes, Fang Xingjian stayed behind in the Headmaster's office.

Devitt looked at Fang Xingjian and said, “Your reward for the Regional Selection is firstly a set of level 29 Superior Divine Armor. The prowess of this armor is tremendous. It's almost the same as getting 50% of the powers of a level 29 Conferred Knight. It's extremely powerful.”

Fang Xingjian smiled. “When will I be able to get a hold of it?”

“There will be people who have been specially tasked to send it over. It'll probably take about another five days.” Devitt looked at Fang Xingjian and continued saying, “When do you plan on going through the second transition? I've already applied for the highest level Sacred Land for you. The ether particles there have a density which is a hundred times that of the outside world, and it will be able to speed up your cultivation after you've completed the second transition.”

Thinking of this, Devitt let out a sigh and said, “You also understand the current situation in the country. The First Prince has been applying pressure on everyone else and will probably to ascend the throne within one or two years. If you want to break out of his control, you must grab every single second and devote it

to your cultivation.”

Fang Xingjian nodded and said, “When can I head to the Sacred Land and go through my second transition?”

When Governor Devitt heard Fang Xingjian’s words, he felt Fang Xingjian was rushing too much, “Transition? Already? Don’t you need to prepare for a little longer? What job do you plan on choosing?”

Fang Xingjian said, “After I’ve looked through the information about the second transitions and find I meet all the requirements for the attribute, I should be going through it immediately.”

Theoretically speaking, the second transition only required one to attain Heaven’s Perception. So, after entering the Sacred Land with a sufficient level of ether particles density, one would be able to complete the second transition.

Knights were able to get information about second transition jobs directly from ether particles due to Heaven’s Perception, and from there, they could select one from the many options.

However, second transition jobs had their own requirements. The more powerful the job, the higher the requirements. Fang Xingjian did not plan to continue spending too much time in the first transition building up his attributes or specialties. He would look through to see which was the strongest second transition job he could transfer into and just go through with it. If he was slightly short on certain requirements, he would make haste to improve in those aspects. There was no need for him to stay on level 19 for too long.

After all, he had his sword arts talent and mystical prints. He could synthesize Killing techniques crazily and receive a boost from the mystical prints. Additionally, the rate at which his ether synchronization was increasing was very quickly. Even if the job he chose was not as good, it would not hold up the progress of his abilities.

Moreover, with his current attributes, he believed Fang Xingjian would be able to complete most second transition jobs successfully.

Governor Devitt frowned. He had wanted to advise Fang Xingjian to build up his foundation first and then transition into a more powerful second transition job. However, Devitt began to think from another perspective, knowing that Fang Xingjian was under tremendous pressure and did not have that much time to build up his foundation.

Governor Devitt nodded. He then made arrangements to collect the Knight attire for Conferred Knights, the Scarlet Cape. It was a powerful equipment which had defensive abilities comparable to a level 19 Inferior Divine Weapon.

The blue and white Knight attire fitted nicely on Fang Xingjian. It would provide warmth during the winter and was cooling even in the summer. It was also extremely thin and light, like a pair of pyjamas made out of silk.

Draped around the back of Fang Xingjian's shoulders, the Scarlet Cape seemed like flaring flames. It had the abilities to guard against high and low temperatures, reduce the pull of gravitational force slightly, as well as increase one's speed.

This was the privilege of a Conferred Knight. With this armor, even if one did not take action, one would be able to have his own way in the entire Empire.

A maid smiled and said, "Sir, are the clothes fitting? Is there anything that needs to be changed?"

"No need." Fang Xingjian shook his head and walked out.

The other reward for the Regional Selection was to select a Royal Killing technique.

Royal Killing techniques were the powerful Killing techniques which were kept secret by the Empire's royalty. They were all reserved specially for second transition Knights, allowing the

practitioner to borrow the tremendous powers from heaven and earth.

Second transition Knights had stepped into Heaven's Perception and gained the additional attribute, the ether synchronization rate. This allowed them to exchange information and power with ether particles.

The exchange of information could allow them to increase the practitioner's observational skills and talent, as well as expand the cultivator's path.

Whereas, exchanging powers with ether particles allowed Conferred Knights to tap into the tremendous powers of the heaven and earth for use in their battles, greatly increasing their damage prowess.

However, there was a limit to the number of such Royal Killing techniques stored in each Regional Academy. There was a total of eight sets of such Killing techniques in the Great Western Region Regional Academy, also known as the Eight Prized Techniques of the West. Some of these Eight Prized Techniques of the West were restricted to using with certain weapons, while others could be used with any weapons.

Respectively, they were: the Dragon Slaying Sword Technique; Titan Divine Power; Gates of Hell; Judgement of Evil; Ten Directional Unrivalled Attack; Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash; and Blood Rampage.

When each batch of new students entered into the Regional Academy, they were able to select one of the Eight Prized Techniques of the West as the Killing technique they wished to cultivate. Thereafter, they could synthesize with other skills to greatly improve their battle prowess.

Of course, the Eight Prized Techniques of the West was only the beginning of the cultivation for those in the second transition. Aside from the ether synchronization rate and attributes, the most

important factor, which contributed to the battle prowess of a second transition, was how powerful their Killing techniques were.

The more Killing techniques succeeded in synthesizing successfully and the greater the quality was, the more suitable it would be for the individual and the stronger the battle prowess would be amongst those of the same level.

A maid handed Fang Xingjian an introduction to the Eight Prized Techniques of the West.

Fang Xingjian took a look through the introductions for each of the Ether Sword Ripples. Now, his three most powerful areas were his speed, his ether sword ripples, as well as Terra Ingurgitation.

If he were to select a Killing technique, he would naturally need to choose one which was a good match with these three areas. It should be able to power up or better perfect these three areas.

It was just like how it was sufficient for him to use the Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash in his battles now. If his opponents were stronger, he would then unleash his explosive speed with his Boundaries Negation. If it was still not enough, then he would use his Ether Sword Ripples, and if that was still insufficient, he would then use Terra Ingurgitation. All these joined up to form his current prowess.

His next step was very simple as well. After selecting the Killing technique he had been rewarded with, he would complete it in the shortest time possible and then complete his job transition.

Thereafter, he would continue to pick up Killing techniques in the Regional Academy and synthesize them to strengthen his skills.

The next point would be to earn money to cultivate his mystical prints and raise his ether synchronization rate. At the second transition phase, he would only be able to rise to the next level with every additional 10% increase of his ether synchronization

rate. To move up from level 19 to level 29, he would need to increase his ether synchronization rate to 100%. Moreover, the ether synchronization rate also related to the amount of the tremendous powers from the heavens and earth which one could tap into.

Therefore, at the second transition phase, the ether synchronization rate was of extreme importance.

Furthermore, after earning money, he would be able to purchase various heavenly and earthly treasures in order to increase his attributes and specialties as well as strengthen his foundations.

In short, the focus of the cultivation in the second transition was on raising attributes, building up specialties, synthesizing skills, and at the same time, increasing the ether synchronization rate and raising his level.

As he thought of his plans to synthesize Killing techniques and earn money while raising his ether synchronization rate, Fang Xingjian's gaze gradually locked onto a Killing technique.

Chapter 253 Learning

The technique Fang Xingjian had decided on was the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash.

The Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash used speed, footwork, light, and shadows to create errors in one's sight and hearing. With each sword attack, many illusions would be created. It was said that ultimately tens of thousands of illusions could be created.

Then when matched with the powers from the ether particles, these illusions would all be given physical forms. What was even more amazing was that the cultivator would be able to switch positions with any of the illusions as he wished.

Of course, the illusions could not be apart from the cultivator beyond a thousand meters.

The reason Fang Xingjian had decided on this Killing technique was firstly because it was a sword technique. Fang Xingjian's sword arts talent was the best in the world, so he would naturally want to choose a sword art Killing technique. This would allow him to cultivate fast and synthesize with many other techniques limitlessly and increase the prowess of his Killing techniques.

The second reason was because this Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash had both attacks and defences. Furthermore, it was also related to both light and speed. So, it was a good match for his Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash.

In fact, Fang Xingjian had also taken a liking to the Killing technique, Blood Rampage. It allowed one to explode their vital energy and blood, and change his form to enter a rampage mode, increasing his five attributes greatly.

It was a pity that this was a 'transformation' Killing technique because such killing techniques, which required one to change their form, would have a high requirement for endurance and

flexibility attributes. Fang Xingjian had yet to reach the requirements in these areas.

As a Knight who specialized in speed, he was more suitable for Killing techniques which increased damage prowess through footwork and speed.

Therefore, Fang Xingjian instructed the maid, "I'll choose the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash. What should I do next?"

The maid bowed and said, "In a while, a teacher who cultivates the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash will be coming here to instruct you. Please wait here for a short moment."

Fang Xingjian nodded, sat cross-legged in the courtyard and rested. He knew that although the Regional Academy was a place to nurture Conferred Knights, so it was impossible for all of the teachers to be Conferred Knights. Furthermore, it was even more impossible for a Conferred Knight teacher to be constantly in the academy at all times.

There were many Conferred Knights in the academy who were teachers officially, but less than half of them were truly involved in teaching. Each of them had their own businesses, clans, influences, and thus, most of them would only need to come over for a short while when there were lessons. For the most part, they would not be in the academy.

Of course, there were also some Conferred Knights who were obsessed with martial arts and stayed in the academy all the time. While they pursued their paths in martial arts, they also had the roles of teachers. These were the people who always stayed in the academy.

After waiting for about two hours, an old man with messy hair and unkempt appearance emerged. It was hard to tell that he was a Knight. After coming in, he threw a glance toward Fang Xingjian and said, "You're an examinee for this year's selection? You seems composed."

Fang Xingjian's brows twitched. It was clear with one look that this old man was a Knight who was engrossed in the pursuit of martial arts. So, it was not strange that he did not recognize Fang Xingjian's identity. There were just too many Knights who were deeply engrossed in the pursuit of martial arts and did not concern themselves with the outside world.

Even twenty-four hours were not enough for them to study martial arts and the ether particles. Being engrossed in cultivation, how could they possibly still concern themselves with things which were happening in the outside world. To the top notch Conferred Knights, things like the Regional Selection were even less of a concern to them.

This was because... for the top Conferred Knights, it would usually be years, or even decades, before the other Conferred Knights in their batch would be able to provide any help to them.

That old man threw a glance at Fang Xingjian, did not give any greetings and then said impatiently, "I've many things to attend to and will leave after teaching you once. If you have any problems, just practice it by yourself."

With that, he waved his hand, broke a branch across space and held it in his hand, demonstrating the sword moves.

"The most important thing in the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash is the footwork, sword techniques, and the use of ether particles. This set of Killing Technique was left behind by the Flash Cult which died out three hundred years ago. Several decades ago, the Royalty collected this Killing Technique, and it's extremely profound. Since you haven't gone through the second transition, it's going to be very difficult for you.

"The clones the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash created are known as Godly Demon Clones. Each of them have physical forms with ether particles channelled into them."

As the old man explained, he waved the branch about, and with a

sway, he created a Godly Demon Clone. The two silhouettes sparred, creating light bangs.

“I’ll teach you the footwork first. There’s a total of 128 steps to the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash’s footwork. They are connected to each other, and only when you’ve managed to switch through the many steps, will you then be able to create a Godly Demon Clone.

“Next is the control of ether particles. Ether particles are waves, and you need to take note of the frequencies. There’s a trick here, which is to keep it at the same frequency as your sword moves.

“The reason why the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash is a set of sword technique is because it changes a person’s frequency through the sword moves and thus creates Godly Demon Clones.”

As he explained, the old man demonstrated all the footwork and sword moves to the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash once through. Although his tone and expression appeared to be extremely impatient, his demonstration was very complete, with no steps missed. It took him a total of three hours to explain each step in detail.

“Alright, my explanation is over. If you can remember, then good. If you can’t, go apply to check out the records in the library. Don’t come and bother me anymore.”

Having said that, he noticed Fang Xingjian had already started practicing the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash. However, he could clearly sense the immaturity in Fang Xingjian’s moves since he had only just started practicing and was not familiar with them.

He laughed and said, “Haha, do you think that this set of sword technique is easy? This is a Killing technique for Conferred Knights—a Killing technique for the second transition.

“It requires the tapping into the tremendous powers from the heavens and the earth in order to exchange powers with ether

particles. It's not as easy as the first transition Killing techniques you have learned in the past..." Then suddenly, the old man stopped.

While the old man was talking, Fang Xingjian's sword moves had become more mature, as though he had been practicing for several months.

By the time the old man was finishing up his sentence, Fang Xingjian's Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash was already being executed smoothly. Each and every step was executed with such perfection that no matter how strict the teacher was, they would not be able to find any problems with it. It was as though Fang Xingjian had been practicing for several years.

Thereafter, amidst the old man's astonished gaze, Fang Xingjian's body swayed, and a Godly Demon Clone appeared in a flash. It then started to spar with Fang Xingjian's real body, and the Demoness' Howl he was holding let out crisp sounds.

However, after a few consecutive collisions, the Godly Demon Clone disappeared, and Fang Xingjian came to a stop. He mumbled to himself, "It's a bit incompatible with my habits, but I can make some changes to it."

With that, he swung his longsword and started to change the sword moves of the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash. He performed the same exact move five times, changing it slightly every time. On the fifth time, a hint of change flashed past his body, and another Godly Demon Clone appeared. Its appearance, disposition, and movements were all many times more concise than before, and it appeared even more realistic.

The old man looked at this scene in disbelief and said, "Is... is this really the first time you're practicing the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash?" He had almost believed Fang Xingjian had learned this technique long ago and was only pretending that he had not.

However, recalling how stiff Fang Xingjian's actions were earlier

and the slight changes he had shown... This was definitely not something which could be acted out so easily.

In the next moment, this martial-arts-obsessed teacher of the Regional Academy suddenly had an escalated appreciation for talent. He could not help but ask, “What’s your name? You seem very talented. How about this, do you want to come help out in my sword arts team?”

Chapter 254 Second Transition Information

Hoppes had initially thought that after he had said this, Fang Xingjian would immediately prostrate before him and join his sword arts team.

He was currently the greatest swordsman in the entire Regional Academy and the strongest sword arts instructor. Just a single page of the results of the study from his sword arts team was worth a thousand gold. Countless teachers had wanted to join the team and study sword arts with him, let alone students.

Hoppes was truly astonished by Fang Xingjian's talent that his appreciation for talent had soared, resulting in him inviting Fang Xingjian.

However, after throwing a glance at Hoppes, Fang Xingjian asked, "What's a sword arts team?"

Hoppes was stunned. However, he quickly recalled Fang Xingjian was a newly enrolled student. Hoppes explained quickly, "Every senior teacher in the Regional Academy can receive an allocation from the budget to conduct advanced studies in the area of ether particles.

"My speciality is in sword arts, and my studies are focused on the area of sword arts synthesis."

With that, he could not help but say, slightly proudly, "Currently, I've successfully researched three new synthesis and uncovered three sets of new second transition Killing techniques. In the past, I've also created a few sets of sword arts myself."

Thinking of this, his interest toward Fang Xingjian soared. If Fang Xingjian's talent was really as outstanding as he had shown and was able to pick up sword techniques at such speed, it would bring a lot of help to his research of sword arts synthesis.

Fang Xingjian nodded, expressing his understanding. He knew

that not everyone had such monstrous talent like he did, and the speed at which they learnt Killing techniques was slow. Moreover, the success rates of synthesis were not 100%, and thus, there would be people who would deduce the possible results of synthesis through various information and theories about sword arts.

With there being so many Killing techniques, ordinary Conferred Knights would not be able to synthesize them all. Even for level 29 Conferred Knights who had 100% success rates in synthesizing techniques, how long would it take for them to bring a set of Killing technique to the maximum level? It would take them at least half a year to one year. How could anyone know the results of the synthesis between every single Killing technique combinations?

Moreover, after two Killing techniques were synthesized successfully, although the new technique could be stronger, they might not necessarily be well-suited for the practitioner. Therefore, knowing the results of the synthesis beforehand was extremely important.

It was just like how the many ultimate Killing techniques of the Ancient Path of Hell had been created through multiple attempts and after knowing various synthesis formulas.

Unrivalled Killing techniques were created through gradual researches.

This was why there were sword arts teams like Hoppes'. Relying on Hoppes' profound theories, deep understanding of sword arts, and research in primitive sword arts, they would come up with deductions of synthesis results. Then they would pick out the the best one and get someone to try it out, in hopes of creating newer and more powerful Killing techniques.

Additionally, this was much better than testing them out one by out, like finding a needle from the ocean.

However, Fang Xingjian did not need to research such things. He

only needed to learn the Killing techniques from the Regional Academy. Letting other people study him would only be looking for trouble.

He knew that with his abilities, entering Hoppes' sword arts team would just mean he would be studied by others. A large amount of his time would be taken up by them, and this would not fit his plans.

Therefore, he simply shook his head and said, "Not interested." With that, he turned his back on Hoppes and left.

Hoppes was still waiting excitedly for Fang Xingjian to join him and had not expected him to simply turn to leave. However, Hoppes was not angry. He merely went into a daze for a short while, as though he was unable to react.

Other than the Sacred Land and the level 29 armor, Fang Xingjian had also confirmed all the rewards he would be receiving from the Regional Selection. Therefore, he decided to head to the library meant for the students of the Regional Academy.

He asked for directions and arrived at a stone fortress. The stone fortress looked like one of those castles from the middle ages, and it was filled with various complicated carvings of flowers, prints and statues.

This was the library for the students of the Regional Academy. All year around, there would be three Conferred Knights stationed on guard. It stored countless powerful secret arts and highly confidential documents. The students and teachers of the Regional Academy were the only ones who could enter.

It was like the Shaolin Monastery's sutra repository mentioned in wuxia stories.

Fang Xingjian walked up to the stone fortress and saw a huge wooden sign there. The wooden sign was five meters tall and half a meter thick. There were many names carved onto it.

This was the rankings of the students in the Regional Academy. When it was time for the National Selection, only the students who were Conferred Knights and ranked in the top ten could participate.

Fang Xingjian looked at the name of the person ranked in first position, Odysseus. The one in second place was Hildebrand. Fang Xingjian looked through all the rankings and then stopped at rank fifty-five.

Fang Xingjian continued on and saw that his name was at position 56. Fang Xingjian, Anderson, Hoult and the others were all ranked within the ten positions from rank fifty-six.

This meant there had originally fifty-five students in the Regional Academy. With them now, there were now sixty-five.

The only reason why there was such a ranking was because of the systems in the Regional Academy.

The Regional Academy was different from Kirst Royal Academy. There was no concept of classes. Every week, various courses would be arranged, and every student could choose freely the courses they wished to attend. Every year, there would be a test for each course, and the results of the tests would determine their credits for each year. A student would only be able to continue on at the academy if they accumulated the sufficient credits.

Another difference was that all students were assigned a ranking. Since Fang Xingjian and the others had just joined, their rankings were placed at the bottom.

The students who were ranked lower could challenge those who were ranked higher, and they could take over the other party's ranking upon winning. The student who was challenged and all the students under him would be moved down one spot automatically.

Of course, there were requirements to such challenges. Each

student could only issue a maximum of five challenges each year and could only accept at most one challenge each week. Additionally, it was forbidden to reject challenges.

Fang Xingjian swept a glance through the rankings before entering the library. He had to make the best use of his time to check on the information regarding job transitions.

He displayed his Knight medallion to the guards and entered the library. The entire library was segregated into three levels, and there were over ten rows of bookshelves on each level.

Students were free to browse through the books on the first and second level. However, the third level were filled with secret manuals of various Killing techniques, and one would only be given the rights to browse upon submitting an application to request for special access.

However, Fang Xingjian's current goal was the second transition. He was not there to learn new Killing techniques and would naturally not need to go to the third storey.

As only students and teachers could come here, there were very few people in the library. Additionally, it was very quiet. After Fang Xingjian entered, no one looked in his direction. He followed the rows of signs in the library and found the materials introducing the second transition jobs.

It was clear there were people keeping the library in order all year round. All the books were categorized and so were the materials on the second transition jobs. They were further categorized by strength, agility, endurance, and other criteria.

Clearly, for different categories, the progress they provided in attributes, as well as the requirements, were all different.

Fang Xingjian immediately picked up a book which introduced second transition jobs which specialized in agility.

He spent the entire night there, 'looking' through, in great detail,

over ten books which introduced the second transition jobs specializing in agility.

Thank goodness he had already attained Heaven's Perception. Otherwise, there was no way he could go through the materials.

Only when morning arrived, did he let out a breath and close the last book. Countless second transition jobs went through his mind, and he started thinking about which he should be choosing.

Chapter 255 Entering the Sacred Land

Fang Xingjian started to recall about the things he had read. One by one, powerful second transition jobs began appearing in his mind.

The Astral Sword Saint was a powerful swordsman who gathered and controlled powers from the stars. He also controlled starlight radiation and astral flames, and performed the Astral Sword Technique.

The Darkness of Death was a swordsman who could control shadows and walk amidst darkness and death, gathering all the emotions of grief, evil spirits, negative emotions, and other things to create sword Qis for use in battle.

The Zenith Light Sword Seigneur created tremors in space and through them, transmitted power to launch attacks. The speed of the spatial tremors were at the speed of light, and thus, the Zenith Light Sword Seigneur's attacks were also at the speed of light. However, as the space was too stable, the attenuation of the tremors were too strong. Thus, only one-thousandth of the prowess of the attacks launched at the speed of light would be shown.

The Typhoon Massacre freely controlled the atmosphere through sword Qis to create typhoons. The damage from these could reach out to a distance of a hundred kilometers. It was one of the second transition jobs with the most powerful wide-range attacks.

Of course, there was still the job which was also seen as the most powerful swordsman typed job amidst all second transitions: Unparalleled Sword Supreme. It allowed the practitioner to instantly pick up and change any sword technique in the world. All other sword techniques would have to prostrate themselves before this job, and this job was one which pursued the highest level of sword arts.

These five jobs were the five most powerful jobs Fang Xingjian could find, which he met the requirements for and could transition into.

At the Conferred Knight level, any of these jobs would be so powerful that they could destroy the world and repress all ordinary Conferred Knight jobs.

Looking through the records in the library, Fang Xingjian studied these five jobs in great detail and eventually decided on Unparalleled Sword Supreme. It was because he knew that the Unparalleled Sword Supreme's abilities could match well with his sword arts talent and bring out his innate potential fully, allowing him to produce twice the amount of results with half the effort. He would be able to reach the peak of sword arts in the shortest possible time.

Of course, there was one more important factor. The Unparalleled Sword Supreme only brought new specialties and would not change the practitioner's original Waves and mental cultivation method. The Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves and the Universal Sword Dominance Lunisolar mental cultivation method were very powerful, and he did not wish to switch and cultivate other Waves after transitioning into another job.

However, Fang Xingjian knew that after entering the Sacred Land, he could read the information in ether particles through Heaven's Perception and from there, choose his job.

It was unlike the first transition, where he had to accept the job transition passively.

Therefore, Fang Xingjian had also given it more thought this time. Since he had been able to transition into the first transition job, the Windshadow Sword Divinity, which there had been no records of, he might also be able to transition into a powerful hidden second transition job with no existing no records of as well.

Closing the book, Fang Xingjian headed for the Regional

Academy's Sacred Land without anyone knowing and without making any additional preparations.

As a swordsman who cultivated endlessly for twenty-four hours daily and was in a state of tight mental tension at all times as though he was treading on thin ice, Fang Xingjian was long prepared for anything.

The Sacred Land was in the middle of the academy. Or rather, it could be said that it was only after this Sacred Land, which had an ether particle density much stronger than ordinary areas, was found that this area's Regional Academy was built around it.

The entire Sacred Land was segregated into ten areas based on the density of the ether particles. It ranged from an area with a density which was ten times stronger to one which had a density one hundred times stronger.

Theoretically, the students who had just enrolled could only enter the areas which had up to thirty times the density. However, as Fang Xingjian's talent was too outstanding, and with the pressure from the First Prince, Governor Devitt had helped him apply for permission to enter the central zone, which had a density that was one hundred times stronger.

The First Prince might not have thought of it... or perhaps, he might not have even cared about it at all, since most people would bow down to him when he applied tremendous pressure... However, there were also some people who would break through their personal limits and try out all sorts of means to go against him.

It was just like how an exception had been given for Fang Xingjian to enter the Sacred Land with a density which was one hundred times stronger.

Fang Xingjian headed toward the center of the academy. The academy was very big, and he did not come across many people along the way. After all, the academy took up an area of ten square

kilometers and yet there were currently only sixty-five students. Rather than an academy, it was more like a research institution.

Therefore, Fang Xingjian came to the entrance of the Sacred Land without coming across any obstructions. There appeared before him an endless stretch of forest with huge trees. As there were really too few students and teachers, the Sacred Land was not reconstructed into an artificial building but kept in its primitive state. However, a path had been built from the entrance, leading straight to the center of the Sacred Land.

Of course, one would be completely mistaken if they thought that people could enter freely through the forest. Other than paving a road through the forests, Conferred Knights and even Divine level experts across many generations had channeled in various ether powers into the forests on both sides of the road. If one were to enter them, even if the person was a Conferred Knight, he could be killed immediately.

Therefore, the only way into the Sacred Land was through this paved pathway. In order to cultivate in the Sacred Land, one could only walk along this pathway to the many houses which had been built in the forest.

Upon entering the perimeters of the forest, Fang Xingjian could sense there were many pairs of eyes looking at him from the darkness. He also knew that these were the guardian ferocious beasts of the Sacred Land.

Unlike the ferocious beasts outside, these had been brought up since the founding of the academy and were in charge of protecting the Sacred Land. Since generations of the ferocious beasts here had remained in the area with many times that of the ether density of the outside world, their evolutions were different from those of the outside as well.

It could be said that they were more intelligent and more powerful.

After walking in about ten meters, there was a white deer of over two meters tall with huge horns. Exuding faint light throughout its body, the deer gradually walked out from the forest and came right up to Fang Xingjian.

With each step, there were faint green lights shimmering under its feet.

Fang Xingjian recalled the important things to note about the Sacred Land, which he had heard from the maid previously, and took out his Knight medallion.

The white deer walked up, smelled Fang Xingjian's Knight medallion, and looked at the prints on the Knight medallion. Then it glanced at Fang Xingjian's face, snorted, and left.

With its departure, Fang Xingjian could sense that the pressure coming from his surroundings seemed to have faded like waves.

“This deer gave out a tremendous amount of pressure. Level 25? Level 26?”

As he watched the white deer leave, Fang Xingjian was suddenly curious if this ferocious beast, whose name he did not know, was delicious.

Shaking his head, he threw away the strange thought and continued on along the path. He soon arrived at the area on the outer ring, with a density which was ten times stronger.

Once he stepped into this area, he felt a tremendous difference. It was as though there were suddenly hundreds of people whispering to him. Disruptive scenes and images appeared in his mind, as though the transmission signals were not good.

‘What powerful ether particles.’

Fang Xingjian took in a deep breath, and it felt as though he had inhaled a hundred different scents. Countless pieces of information surged straight into his brain.

Chapter 256 Progressing Onward All the Way

With Fang Xingjian's strong willpower, he managed to get accustomed to the area, with ten times density, within over ten seconds. He was completely unaffected by these pieces of information.

Fang Xingjian then continued to progress into the area with a density which was thirty times stronger. This area was still filled with woods and small hills, as though it was a modern woodland park. However, on the way, he could sense that there seemed to be countless pairs of eyes watching him from the darkness of the forest.

He knew that these were the guardian ferocious beasts keeping watch on him. However, he had been given the privilege to enter the Sacred Land with a hundred times density and thus was not afraid of their surveillance. He took great steps forward and saw many houses built along the road. Each house was made from huge slabs of marble. Additionally, the houses were spacious, huge, vast, and filled with an aura of primitive simplicity.

Fang Xingjian could sense from a majority of the houses that there were occasional sounds of strong air explosions, thunderous sounds, or unique auras which came from sword intents, blade intents, and the like.

He knew that these were from people cultivating, conducting research, or training in seclusion.

Not caring about all these, Fang Xingjian continued to onward, sensing the ether particles in the surroundings were getting denser and denser. He felt like he was a rubbish bin, with various rubbish being stuffed into his brain ceaselessly.

It was as though he were an old computer model, but a

tremendous amount of data was being stuffed forcefully into his hard disk.

Even with Fang Xingjian's strong willpower and mind, he could not help but stop in the area with fifty times the density and sat down on the ground.

He continued to adjust his body, relax his breathing, and change his focus, gradually getting himself accustomed to the horrifying surge of information from the ether particles of fifty times the density.

His ether synchronization rate was only at 10%. So, it was really hard for him to imagine how those higher level Conferred Knights would feel when they came here.

It was no wonder that with the increase in the synchronization rate, there would be people who would go crazy or even become a vegetable because they were not able to handle the gush of information.

All kinds of meaningless information flashed before Fang Xingjian and were casually stuffed into his brain. Just then, sounds of footsteps rang out from behind him.

With his Heaven's Perception, Fang Xingjian could sense it was a young man with long red hair. He grinned at Fang Xingjian and said, "Hey brother, are you alright? Sacred Land of such high density is not somewhere you can enter carelessly."

Fang Xingjian shook his head to indicate that he was fine. He stood up and was about to walk deeper into where the density of ether particles was higher, with more information and greater options for job transitions.

That young man with red hair patted Fang Xingjian on the shoulder and said, "I think you should just forget it. You can't even stand up properly. How did you get the approval for access to Sacred Land of such a high level?"

“Also, I don’t think I have seen you before? Are you a newcomer?”

“Why do you keep your eyes closed?”

“Do you need me to call for a doctor for you?”

“Since you’re feeling so bad, I think you’re better off not going in. You can’t even focus when you’re feeling so awful. How can you possibly cultivate?”

“Cultivation is something that has to come naturally... How can it be done so recklessly like how you’re doing it?”

“Shut up.” Fang Xingjian just felt that the red-haired young man’s mouth was like five hundred ducks quacking away. He could not help but interrupt the red-haired young man with a cold expression, “Go do what you’re here for. Don’t come and bother me.”

The red-haired young man shrugged and was about to say more when a lady with purple hair walked over. When she saw Fang Xingjian seated on the floor, cross-legged, she laughed and said, “Is this another overconfident newcomer? Coming to Sacred Land of such high density straight away, thinking that your talent is unrivalled... You better head back quickly. If you continue to stay here, your brain might just burst.”

Fang Xingjian could not be bothered with them. Feeling that his mind had less burden now, he stood up and continued into the deeper parts of the Sacred Land.

“Hey, you really can’t continue on,” The red-haired young man said, frowning. “You’re a new student, right? Didn’t anyone remind you? It’s true that the higher the density of ether particles, the better the effects are for cultivation. However, not everyone can accept such a high density right from the start. It’s very dangerous for you to go on like this.”

The purple-haired lady looked at the red-haired young man helplessly and said, “Sauron, are you being a busybody again? We

agreed that we would be practicing our combined attacks together today.”

“But we can’t possibly leave him alone.” Sauron watched as Fang Xingjian took small steps and continued along the pathway. Sauron could not help but follow behind him, continuing his attempt to persuade Fang Xingjian, “Considering how awful you’re feeling now, you really should stop. It’s not good for your brain. You should stay and get accustomed to the areas with thirty or forty times density for a few days before going in.”

However, Fang Xingjian paid no heed to Sauron. Having the world’s best sword arts talent, Fang Xingjian had long discovered that his willpower, courage, memory, reasoning, and ability of the brain to process information had far surpassed that of others at his age. Ordinary people would need to spend time in order to get accustomed to the density of the ether particles, but he merely needed to take a short rest and would have gotten used to it.

Seeing that Fang Xingjian was paying no heed to Sauron, the purple-haired lady said, “Alright, just leave him be. You can stop him now, but you can’t stop him forever. If he wants to court death, just let him.”

The purple-haired lady continued to bug Sauron, and eventually, he left with her. However, before he left, he continued to advise Fang Xingjian not to enter too deep. Additionally, that if he was in danger, he should shout out for help.

However, Fang Xingjian could not be bothered with them. After walking for a distance, he felt his mind getting clearer and clearer, as though he was gradually growing accustomed to the rising density of the ether particles. He even started to learn how to accept the various information selectively.

He would accept the useful information and chuck those useless ones deep into a corner of his mind, leaving them there as though they were rubbish.

Gradually, it was as though the graphics quality had improved, and his Heaven's Perception was able to sense and recreate the images in the surroundings which were within a proximity of ten meters. The images grew increasingly clearer and brighter.

It was as though each inch of space within this ten meter radius was extremely familiar to him, like they were a part of his body.

As he sensed this feeling grow increasingly clearer and familiar to him, he began to crave for more ether particles. His legs started to speed up, moving faster and faster. In the blink of an eye, he activated Boundaries Negation unconsciously and tore through the atmosphere, creating a passageway which was almost like a vacuum. He continued to forge ahead ceaselessly, leaving behind swooshing sounds.

Sauron and the purple-haired lady, who were originally up ahead, only felt a strong impact wave surge over and saw a black line pass by them. Then Fang Xingjian had already disappeared from their lines of sight.

It was impossible to see Fang Xingjian's silhouette through the naked eye, but both of them were Conferred Knights, strong warriors who had stepped into Heaven's Perception. No matter how fast Fang Xingjian's speed was, as long as he had passed by them within a ten meter radius, they would be able to sense him.

"Not good. He's gone crazy." Astonished, Sauron immediately gave chase. "We must stop him. With him dashing on like this, when the density gets higher and higher... he really will enter a state of frenzy and become a lunatic."

The purple-haired lady shook her head helplessly, "What rotten luck! To think that we would come across such a hothead when we've just come back to the Sacred Land."

Chapter 257 Density

Sauron pressed on quickly as he said, “Don’t saying that, Nina... We’re all Conferred Knights. Have you forgotten that other people had also taken care of us when we first came?”

“Now, a tremendous amount of information is surging into his brain. If his brain can’t take it and he enters a state of frenzy, he may become a complete lunatic, and his whole life would be ruined.”

Nina shook her head, channelled more force on her feet and sped up, “Alright, alright. Let’s quickly chase up to him and bring him back. Thank goodness that this lad is just a new student, so it won’t take us much effort. Let’s hurry.”

The two of them were Conferred Knight from two selections ago. Currently, they were both at second transition level 24. To them, catching a new student was as simple as an eagle trying to catch a little chick.

They sped up furiously, bringing along streams of strong gales and whistling sound waves. They continued charging forth, but Fang Xingjian was nowhere to be seen.

A hint of astonishment flashed in their eyes. Then as they exchanged a glance, a series of loud booms rang out under their feet, and air currents soared. They continued to increase their speed, and in the blink of an eye, they were already at five times that of supersonic speed. However, Fang Xingjian was still nowhere to be seen.

Sauron let out a loud shout and turned into a tornado, sweeping deep into the Sacred Land. At the same time, he shouted out from the front through the trembling air created by his Reduced Force Field.

“I’ll go up first and check it out. I’ll wait for you at the front.”

With a tremendous boom, he stepped explosively onto the pathway under his feet, leaving deep footprints. Countless amounts of sand, dust, and shattered rocks flew up as Sauron gradually disappeared from the purple-haired Nina's sight.

However, their speed was already very fast. Although Sauron continued to speed up, Nina had caught up with him not long after because he had come to a stop.

Nina shouted, "What's wrong? Where's that guy? You didn't manage to catch him?"

Sauron frowned and pointed to the front. Nina was just about to continue on when Sauron pulled her back.

"What's wrong? Weren't you the one who wanted to save him?" Nina could not understand and asked Sauron, "Why aren't we giving chase?"

Sauron pointed to the sign in front and said, "We're now at the area with sixty-nine times the density. If we were to proceed, it would be the area of seventy times density or more. We don't have the approval to enter."

"What? We're already at sixty-nine times the density?" Nina looked at the sign and said in astonishment, "But we didn't catch up with that guy on the way! Could it be that he had dashed into the forest?"

Sauron shook his head and said, "Not possible. If he were to dash into the forest, he'd be immediately struck by the powers left behind by the previous generations. We'd have long seen him if he had done so."

"Then, he has found a house and has hidden in it?"

"The area with fifty to seventy times the density is the most popular one. There are very few empty houses, and he'd need to dash coincidentally into an empty one. Moreover, we've been chasing so closely behind him. How could it be possible that we

didn't see him going through the handover procedures?"

If a person wanted to enter an empty house in the Sacred Land, the individual would need to go through the handover procedures with the guardian ferocious beasts in the area in order to let them affirm the person's identities and understand the individual's intent for entering. Only then would they remember the person, protect the person, and chase away other people who wished to enter. This would, thus, ensure that the person would not receive any disruption from his cultivation.

Nina said impatiently, "This is impossible, that is impossible. So, what on earth is it?"

"There's only one possibility. That guy's speed is so fast that he was able to lose us with great ease, and he also has the rights to enter the areas in the Sacred Land beyond seventy times the density." Sauron smiled helplessly and said, "This newcomer is really not simple. We've shown our concern to the wrong person. He's much stronger than us."

"Hmph, the new students these days know how to play a fool at their young age?" Nina spoke with spite. "Do you remember how he looks like? When we get back, let's check out just who he is."

...

Elsewhere, Fang Xingjian was charging on furiously by himself, into the deepest area in the Sacred Land. He was going into an area at the center, where the density of ether particles was the highest at one hundred times the density.

The area had a stretch of scenic mountainous valleys with lush greenery. There were many small lakes in the mountain valleys, and ten villas had been built here.

With an ether particle density of one hundred times, the ether particles here contained even more information. This was especially so when top notch Conferred Knights had been

cultivating here over the years. When he took in a breath, Fang Xingjian could even feel theories for sword techniques and fist techniques gushing into his body.

“Sword in hand, swinging as I picture it... but without a source of power, how do I execute the moves...”

“Fist of mine, press on boldly. Have no regrets even through a hundred deaths...”

“Loyalty! Convictions! Honor! Courage!”

“When the enemy is in front, there’s nothing to fear! Be resolute, have courage, be loyal, and have a clear conscience! Be righteous and rather die than submit! Protect the weak and have a strong sense of justice!”

Various ideas, martial arts, and martial art theories turned into streams of information and surged into Fang Xingjian’s mind.

He had no choice but to get rid of those which he did not suit him, and leave those which were useful to him.

The Sacred Land had been maintained for two hundred years, and during these two hundred years, countless outstanding and talented Conferred Knights had cultivated here. As they absorbed information and power from the ether particles, they would also leave behind their own information and power.

This place was like a great treasure chest, accumulating the experience and powers of countless top notch experts.

Fang Xingjian felt as though it had only been a few minutes before the bottleneck, which he had been stuck at with his sword arts for a long period of time, started to shift.

It was no wonder that so many Conferred Knights wanted to enter the area of the Sacred Land where the density was one hundred times stronger. This was simply a paradise for cultivators.

Fang Xingjian lifted his head to look toward the villas. Each of

these villas were encompassed with a layer of power from ether particles. The layer of power could absorb the ether particles in the entire Sacred Land endlessly for attacks and defenses, and thus, ensure the safety of the person in the villa.

When each Conferred Knight was cultivating, they would be in a seemingly entranced state. All their consciousness would be focused on their cultivation, and thus, they would require many layers of protection.

There were a total sixteen villas in the entire area. According to the academy's estimation, this was a number which would neither waste the land area nor reduce the density of the ether particles due to there being too many people cultivating.

There was a limit to the number of people which could be allowed in each area throughout the Sacred Land.

Fifteen of the sixteen villas here were encompassed by various light. Clearly, defensive powers had been activated, and ether particles were being taken in and sent out endlessly, creating a change to the waves frequency. Thus, various lights were then produced.

The last remaining villa was naturally left for Fang Xingjian. Fang Xingjian entered the villa and discovered that although the villa had not been maintained for a prolonged period of time, there was not a hint of dust, and there were no signs of old age.

Fang Xingjian had been told by the maid previously that the maintenance of cleanliness and serving of food were all done by the guardian ferocious beasts.

Therefore, although no one came in often, the Conferred Knights who came here to cultivate would not have to waste too much energy on the trifle matters.

With a quick glance, Fang Xingjian found the training room in the villa and sat down. He started adjusting his breathing,

gradually accepting the information from the ether particles, and looking for information related to second transition.

As his mind calmed down, he slowly started to capture the information about second transition jobs. One by one, they streamed into his mind.

Chapter 258 The Completion of the Second Transition

One could only become calm upon quieting down, and one would only be able to gain wisdom upon calming down.

As Fang Xingjian's thoughts quieted down, his consciousness started to huddle together, focusing on gathering information related to second transition jobs.

More and more information about second transitions started to flow into his brain.

Tempest Overlord, Gale Sword Deity, Aurora Sword Spirit, Astral Sword Saint, Darkness of Death...

One by one, the pieces of information about second transitions started to jump out. They were all jobs which Fang Xingjian fulfilled the conditions for.

Under Fang Xingjian's Heaven's Perception, the pieces of information appeared around Fang Xingjian like numerous transparent display screens. In the display screens, various scenes and pictures started to form from the countless pieces of information.

They all showed how it would be like when one performed the skills during battle and when one cultivated in each respective jobs.

Fang Xingjian could sense that as long as he focused his attention onto a particular display screen, he would end up choosing the job and going through that transition.

The secrets to the second transition jobs were all in the second transition. At this point, Fang Xingjian's understanding toward ether particles seemed to have increased as well.

In fact, even in the ordinary spaces such as by the seaside, in the

mountain valleys, or on the plains, as long as the individual was calm and tried hard to search for information regarding second transition jobs, they would also be able to go through the job transition.

However, the density of ether particles in ordinary spaces was too low. Limited by both the density and type of ether particles, the types of second transition jobs one could sense there would also be different.

This was why people wanted to go through their job transitions in the Sacred Lands with the highest density level. It was where they could receive the most complete information regarding second transitions in the greatest amount.

As the second transition jobs popped up, one after another, the jobs which Fang Xingjian had held in high regards began to appear as well.

The second transition job at the top of all swordsman typed transition jobs, the dream of all swordsmen, the job which all of them would work toward with untiring vigor, even to their deaths... The Unparalleled Sword Supreme had finally appeared before Fang Xingjian.

‘Stars, atmosphere, darkness, height... Although I know about all these, none of them are really what I specialize in.

‘The reason I’ve gained these powers was all from relying on my sword talent.

‘The strongest, most basic, and most powerful thing I have... is still my own sword arts.

‘Therefore...’

As he contemplated this, Fang Xingjian’s consciousness gradually focused on the Unparalleled Sword Supreme. However, at the next moment, he sensed an even stronger, sharper, more irresistible, and unstoppable aura being sent to him.

‘This is...’

Fang Xingjian’s consciousness headed over, continuing to probe deeper, as though entering the deepest spot in the sea of information. Then finally, in the deepest area of the information currents, he sensed another job.

The Heavenly Sword Sovereign: one would live for the sword, die for the sword, pursue the sword for the sword.

One’s strength, speed, reaction, endurance, and flexibility would all be increased by 10 points each.

After the job transition was complete, one would gain four main specialties.

The first specialty was Swordless Path. The swordsman should not lose because he was swordless. A blade of grass, a branch, a bamboo and a stone could all act as swords. The powers from ether particles could be used to strengthen any ordinary weapon, allowing them to be strengthened temporarily to the level of a level 19 Inferior Divine Weapon. When the weapon left the hand, the effect would be gone.

The second was Sword Bones. By having sword bones which seemed to be made by the heavens, one’s skeletal structure throughout the body would gradually be turned into innate sword bones, increasing the toughness of the bones. The toughness could be enhanced by endless sword intents to reach the toughness of a Divine Weapon of a similar level. Containing sword intents within, one’s punches and kicks would have the power of a piercing or slashing sword.

This meant that the toughness of one’s bones would be increase. It would be under a circumstance whereby one did not have to go through the process of forging to be able to increase one’s bones to the level of a Divine Weapon.

For example, as Fang Xingjian was at level 20, the strength of his

bones could reach the level of a level 20 Superior Divine Weapon. The forces from each punch and kick he unleashed would all be turned into the slashing force of a sword.

This meant that the toughness of Fang Xingjian's body and his damage prowess had both increased.

The third was Darkness Sword Sense. Although one's sight would be lost, the pure darkness would allow one to be better at focusing on the pursuit for the highest level in sword arts. By sensing the mysteries of the movements of the ether particles, the rate at which one's sword arts mastery as well as all cultivation of sword arts related to ether particles would increase by many folds.

Lastly, there was the specialty, the Heavenly Sword Imprint. One's body would hold the secrets of all sword arts in the world, and the maximum level attainable for all sword arts would be increased by 10 levels.

The four specialties, namely: Swordless Path; Sword Bones; Darkness Sword Sense; and Heavenly Sword Imprint... Each of the new specialties seemed even stronger and more terrifying than the previous one. What made Fang Xingjian's heart skip a beat was that the job progress added 10 points to each of the five main attributes. However, no other Waves or mental cultivation method came with it, and there were only extremely powerful specialties.

This was a second transition job which was even stronger, even more powerful, and even more suitable for Fang Xingjian than the Unparalleled Sword Supreme.

Moreover, this was something he had not come across when he had been researching information regarding second transition jobs.

If someone were to tell Fang Xingjian at this point that the Unparalleled Sword Supreme was the top job amongst all second transition jobs for swordsmen, he would definitely let out a snort of contempt.

‘Then... I’ll decide on you.’

In the next moment, Fang Xingjian felt all his consciousness gather on the piece of information for the Heavenly Sword Sovereign. Various energies and pieces of information gushed toward him, dashing into his brain.

Fang Xingjian felt that the connection between his body and the external environment had been established. The ether particles in his body continued to exchange with those in the external environment, exchanging information, exchanging energies.

After many rounds of exchanges, his body was slowly starting to change and transform.

The comprehension required only a short moment, but the strengthening of his physical body required a huge amount of material foundation.

In order to attain Heaven’s Perception, one’s brain had to evolve. After this evolution, its ability to absorb a large amount of information and energies would then grow, powering up one’s entire body explosively.

Fang Xingjian could sense that his bone structure was going through a transformation, and his brain seemed to have started a second development. Each strand of muscle, each nerve, each blood vessel, all seemed to be going through an intrinsic transformation.

However, he had yet to go through his consciousness in such fine detail. He only allowed his body to continue absorbing information and energies, gradually being strengthened little by little.

A large amount of energy was being absorbed, and a large amount of energy was being depleted. It was as though the surface under Fang Xingjian’s skin was inflating as it swelled up and became increasingly powerful.

Just like that, ten days and ten nights passed by. Fang Xingjian’s

consciousness merged with his body, without being affected by even the slightest hint of external influences.

Then the current morning arrived, and his eyes opened abruptly. Fang Xingjian had already lost his eyesight previously, but at this moment, his pupils appeared to have been turned into an endlessly deep, pitch-black color.

He stood up, and the bones all over his body released pitter patter explosive sounds. The sections of his spine hit against each other, creating the sounds of steel reinforcing bars smashing against cement ground. It was as though each of his bones were now made out of a completely different material than from before.

Fang Xingjian then took one step forward. With a slight exertion of force, the rug on the ground was sliced into two, and there seemed to be a sharp shock wave sweeping through the air. When he looked to the ground, he could see streams of sword marks which were a few inches deep.

Due to his sword bones, the force he exerted had been turned into a sharp power which he was unable to keep under full control. This was why such a powerful slicing force had been created with just a slight move of his limbs.

His vital energy and blood were boiling and were as lively as if he had just woken up. Despite him not having had any food, drink, or sleep for the past ten days, his vital energy and blood did not seem weak at all.

‘I’ve finally completed the second transition.’

Fang Xingjian then looked at his attributes. He had long reached the maximum experience for level 19. However, the past ten days and nights worth of cultivation allowed him to not only complete the second transition but allowed him to rise up to level 20 as well. Fang Xingjian had become a true blue Conferred Knight.

Chapter 259 Coming Out From Seclusion

Fang Xingjian's attributes had now become:

Name Fang Xingjian

Age 17

Occupation Heavenly Sword Sovereign

Level 20

Strength 83+6

Agility 192+6

Reaction 87

Endurance 57

Flexibility 59

Ether Synchronization Rate 10%

The attributes above come into effect once the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves is activated.

Due to Perfect Muscles, +5 in strength and agility (10% of the endurance attribute).

Skills / Techniques: Boundaries Negation,

Rebirth Sword Technique,

New Nine-Headed Dragon Sword Technique,

Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash,

Ether Sword Ripples,

Level 4 Ether Divine Art

Specialties: Genius Swordsmanship,

Elementary Survival Instinct,

Internal Healing,

Internal Training,
Sword Specialist,
Heightened Reflexes,
Perfect Muscles,
Elementary Berserkness,
Level 1 Unparalleled Sword Intent
Sword Bones,
Swordless Path,
Darkness Sword Sense,
Heavenly Sword Imprint
Waves Level 1 Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves
Mental Cultivation Method Level 5 Universal Sword Dominance
Lunisolar

Potential 20,000 point increase/day

By advancing to a second transition level 20 Heavenly Sword Sovereign, not only was Fang Xingjian's attributes strengthened greatly, his Waves, the Prodigious Astral Divine Powers Waves, could also start to level up. Additionally, his ether synchronization rate could also continue to rise.

Moreover, with the special effect of the Heavenly Sword Imprint, the maximum level for his sword techniques were increased by another ten levels, giving them further room to grow.

A feeling of satisfaction rose up inside Fang Xingjian's mind.

Concurrently, a strong feeling of hunger passed through his body. Although he had absorbed a tremendous amount of energy from ether particles for the past ten days and nights, they were merely energy which had been used to reconstruct his body. His stomach had gone without food for a whole ten days and he was also depleted of energy. After the reconstruction of his body, he

now felt hungry.

However, at the next moment, this feeling was interrupted.

“Fang Xingjian!

“Xingjian!

“Xingjian, are you around?”

A male voice rang out incessantly from outside the villa, eventually reaching Fang Xingjian’s ears. However, Fang Xingjian could tell this voice did not belong to anyone he knew.

Despite this, he could not possibly leave the person be and let him continue shouting. Moreover, Fang Xingjian had just completed his second transition and was about to go out for a walk. He wanted to look for Ferdinand and the others and discuss how they could go about earning money.

When Fang Xingjian left the villa, he saw an unscrupulous-looking man with a sharp mouth, sunken cheeks, and tanned skin standing outside. The man was looking at Fang Xingjian through the protective layer of lights.

When he saw Fang Xingjian, he acted all familiar with Fang Xingjian and greeted him warmly, “Xingjian, Xingjian, you’ve finally come out. I’ve been coming here twice a day to look for you. I’ve finally gotten the chance to meet you.” As though he was afraid Fang Xingjian did not know how sincere he was, he explained in further detail, “I’ve been coming here every morning and night to call out your name for half an hour... You must have been so focused on your training that you didn’t even hear me.”

When he said that, a hint of fury flashed in his eyes, as though he felt that Fang Xingjian had been ignoring him intentionally.

However, seeing that Fang Xingjian’s countenance was pale as though he had suffered from a great illness, the man was slightly astonished.

Fang Xingjian asked directly, “Who are you? Why have you come to look for me?”

That student with a sharp mouth and sunken cheeks grinned. Concealing the fury he was feeling, he put up a fawning expression and said, “Xingjian, hehe, you’re this year’s Regional Champion. I’ve had great admiration for you for quite a while now.”

Seeing that Fang Xingjian seemed to be slightly annoyed, the student immediately introduced himself, “My name is Zhou Xingwen. Hehe, like you, Xingjian, I’m also a Westerner. I’ve just hit level 22 a month ago and am currently ranked in the 49th position.” When he said this, he seemed to appear slightly more confident before Fang Xingjian. ‘Although you’re a great talent, I am, after all, more senior. My level is higher, and so is my ranking.’

With that, he stood with a more upright posture and continued saying, “Although there are people from all over living in this country, the people from the Empire still have their guards up against us, the descendents of Westerners. Therefore, we should join forces to protect our interests. The reason I’ve come to look for you today is firstly because I hope that you can join our Western Society.

“You don’t have to feel too pressured. This is just something like a salon or a club. All the people in it are Westerners. After joining, everyone will share their experiences and help each other out, and we won’t have to be bullied by the locals. Hehe, most of the Conferred Knights in the academy who are Westerners have all joined.”

He seemed to sound very logical. If Fang Xingjian were truly a Westerner and had been discriminated against since young, or had been bullied by the locals in the Empire, he might join this group which was similar to an association of fellow townsmen.

However, Fang Xingjian was not a Westerner. He was an

Earthling who was of no relation to Miracle World. Moreover, his feelings of love, kinship, and friendship had all been taken away from him. Therefore, it was impossible to hope that he would like this Western Society.

Fang Xingjian shook his head and said, "Not interested. If there's nothing else, you can leave."

Zhou Xingwen was stunned for a moment, as though he had never expected Fang Xingjian to reject him so easily. However, he continued the conversation, "Hehe, no need to think too much about joining the society. There are no political implications. It's just a club that everyone can join freely. There are neither any missions nor any distinctions of superiority and inferiority. If you feel that it's not a good fit, you can just go learn more about it and then give it more thought."

"Hehe, Xiao Tianxia and Wang Tiangang, who are third and ninth respectively in our academy, are both in the Western Society. You can think about it more before you come to a decision."

"There's nothing to consider. I don't have time to waste on such things."

Seeing that Fang Xingjian was still indifferent, Zhou Xingwen smiled sheepishly and said, "Hehe, it's fine, it's fine. Our doors will always remain open for you."

While he said this, he could not hide the hint of fury in his eyes. He had not expected Fang Xingjian to be so arrogant as to not show him any respect.

He had initially wanted to get closer to Fang Xingjian with the fact that they were both Westerners and then continue on with the conversation. However, Fang Xingjian did not show him any courtesy.

Despite this, when he thought of the request he had been

entrusted with, and the amount of money he had spent during this time just to have someone bring him into the area with one hundred times the density... he decided to hold it in.

Not everyone could enter the Sacred Land with one hundred times the density. Aside from the sixteen people here who had been given approval to train there, there were only one or two more people who would go there everyday. They were in charge of inspecting the Sacred Land and doing the things that the guardian ferocious beasts could not.

The guardian ferocious beasts were, after all, not humans. They were unable to do things such as conducting surveillance over the defensive powers, checking and fixing the houses, and the maintenance of the vegetations in the area.

Clearly, this job position for doing the maintenance work in the Sacred Land was one that many would fight for. However, each person could only do it for at most fifteen days, and they would need to spend a large sum of money as well.

Therefore, Zhou Xingwen was unwilling to leave just like that. He smiled and said to Fang Xingjian, “Xingjian, actually, I have another thing to discuss with you today. It’s a great thing to both you and me.”

He grinned and continued, “Seeing how your face is so pale and you’re mentally tired out, you must have been unable to withstand the Sacred Land with one hundred times the density? You’ve taken too big a step right from the start. A new student like you should start from the Sacred Land with ten times the density and then gradually proceed further.

“In the course of history, there have been countless people who were anxious for quick success and thus entered the Sacred Land with density that was too high. In the end, their brains were attacked by tremendous amounts of information, and they would enter states of frenzy or go crazy.

“Actually, you’re not suitable for cultivating here. So, you see, I have an opportunity here for you...”

Chapter 260 Trading

Seeing that Fang Xingjian did not stop him from talking, Zhou Xingwen continued, “Look at how you’re not that accustomed to a Sacred Land with a high density... I know of some Conferred Knights who have been wanting to come to the Sacred Land with one hundred times the density to cultivate. This is a good opportunity that will benefit both sides.”

How could Fang Xingjian be fooled so easily? His words were just like his sword arts, straight to the point.

“Who has his eyes on the Sacred Land I have access to? How much is he willing to pay?”

To Fang Xingjian, the use of the Sacred Land was for him to speed up his cultivation progress. However, if the other party could offer a reasonable price, for example, one million gold, or a complete set of Divine level suit, he would naturally be willing to give this up.

Zhou Xingwen had not expected that Fang Xingjian would be so straight to the point. After being stunned for a short moment, he said, “It’s like this, Wang Tiangang, the person ranked ninth in our Regional Academy, is just like a god who descended from the heavens. He has just turned thirty-five years old but is already a level 26 Conferred Knight.

“His White Monarch Sword Technique is well known throughout the entire Genius Swordsmanship, and he can even keep up with the Governor in a spar for up to ten moves without losing. He’s really a genius.

“With the National Selection next year, Brother Tiangang also hopes to make a final dash in this last year. His Majesty has given the orders to increase the rewards for the National Selection next year by a lot. If one can get into the top ten, they will really be able to soar into success and leave their name behind in history.

“Xingjian, although you’re also a great talent, you’ve only just enrolled in the school, and it’s impossible for you to participate in next year’s National Selection. Moreover, you’ve only just started your training for the second transition, so you’re not suited to be where the density of the ether particles are too high. If you were to forcefully train here, your brain and mind would suffer from damages like how it’s doing now.

“Why don’t you pass this chance to Brother Tiangang? He’ll find a piece of Sacred Land where the density is lower for your cultivation. He’ll also pay the difference for the two spots, and you definitely won’t lose out.

“Don’t worry. If you want to go through the second transition, you can come and use this place anytime. Brother Tiangang will definitely not stop you.”

Zhou Xingwen spoke so much that his throat was parched. However, determination filled his eyes.

After all, from his point of view, Fang Xingjian had only just entered the academy, so it was impossible for him to participate in the National Selection which would be conducted next year. Moreover, Fang Xingjian would also need to slowly get accustomed to the Sacred Land of such a high density.

Under such a circumstance, temporarily giving up the rights to cultivate in the Sacred Land in exchange for Wang Tiangang’s friendship and compensation... This was truly worth it. Once Wang Tiangang passed the National Selection, he would definitely not forget his debt to Fang Xingjian.

Zhou Xingwen had everything thought out before he came here to convince Fang Xingjian. It was because, to him, as long as the person was not an idiot, he would not be able to reject this proposal.

However, what he did not know was that Fang Xingjian was really intending to participate in the National Selection which

would be held next year.

Fang Xingjian asked, “What’s the price that Wang Tiangang is offering?”

“It’s Brother Tiangang,” Zhou Xingwen corrected. “Your Sacred Land has been applied for by the Governor himself for the duration of a year. If you’re willing to hand the whole year to Brother Tiangang, he’s willing to fork out 300,000 gold, or any resources that are equivalent to the price of 300,000 gold.”

300,000 gold was already the allocated budget for some Prefectural Academies for a couple of years. It was also a large sum of money that Wang Tiangang had to put together from various sources with the addition of what he had been saving for decades.

Even if that was the case, this only showed just how wealthy these Conferred Knights in the Great Western City were.

The wealth of a Conferred Knight was truly unfathomable.

However, when Fang Xingjian heard the offered price, he frowned slightly and said, “It’s too little.”

“Too little?” When Zhou Xingwen heard the offer of 300,000 gold back then, he had been dumbfounded and his eyes had glimmered. 300,000 gold was enough for the purchase of a Divine Weapon which was level 25 or higher. Even if it were used to purchase heavenly and earthly treasures, it would push an ordinary person’s attributes to Knight-level.

Or if it were spent on the Conferred Knight’s training, the gold could also last for several years.

Yet, to think that Fang Xingjian had found it to be too little. Zhou Xingwen immediately tried to persuade Fang Xingjian, “300,000 is really not little. Xingjian, wasn’t your sword destroyed during the arena battle? 300,000 gold is enough to get you a level 26 or 27 Superior Divine Weapon.”

Seeing that Fang Xingjian was still shaking his head, Zhou

Xingwen could not hold it in and said, “400,000...” Then when he saw Fang Xingjian turn to leave, he immediately shouted, “500,000. 500,000 gold!”

As though he had unleashed an ultimate attack, Zhou Xingwen, who had just shouted out the price of 500,000 gold, looked at Fang Xingjian and said breathlessly, “This is the highest price Brother Tiangang can offer. Xingjian, don’t go too far. 500,000 is enough to get you a top quality Superior Divine Weapon or push up your attributes by tens of points!”

However, Zhou Xingwen was once again met with great disappointment. Fang Xingjian shook his head and headed for his villa. “It’s a fixed price of one million gold. Tell Wang Tiangang, if he can’t afford so much, don’t come wasting my time.”

“One million?” Hearing this number, Zhou Xingwen almost spat out a mouthful of blood. How much was one million gold? There would probably not be more than five people in the entire Great Western City who would be able to bring out so much. Moreover, those people would definitely be second transition level 29 experts or high level aristocrats who had saved up for up to a hundred years. Only these people would be able to accumulate such a walloping sum of wealth.

To Zhou Xingwen, Fang Xingjian was simply demanding an exorbitant and preposterous price.

He could not hold it in and shouted, “Xingjian, it’s impossible for you to be able to sell it out at this price. Do you want this piece of Sacred Land to rot in your hands? It’s impossible for a novice like you to be able to train for too long in the Sacred Land with one hundred times the density.

“Rather than leaving it to rot, you might as well use it to exchange for more resources. And I believe that other than Brother Tiangang, no one else would be able to offer a higher price than 500,000 gold.”

Fang Xingjian ignored Zhou Xingwen's nagging and went back to his room. He needed to find some food. After not having eaten for ten days, his stomach and intestines were now all shrivelled and squashed together.

Seeing Fang Xingjian's backview slowly disappear through the front door, a hint of fury flashed in Zhou Xingwen's eyes. Recalling how he had boasted to Wang Tiangang that he would definitely be able to get the job done, Zhou Xingwen just felt somewhat weak now.

'This guy is really as unrestrained and just persistent in his own ways as the rumors say.

'He really doesn't know a thing about how to conduct himself in society.'

Thinking of this, Zhou Xingwen let out a long sigh and left with a feeling of fury. However, thinking of the amount of money he had paid in order to enter the Sacred Land, his face scrunched up painfully.

'Damn you, Fang Xingjian. To think that you're not even willing to let it go at 500,000 gold... Aren't you afraid of taking too much of what you can't handle?

'You can just continue to guard over this Sacred Land. I'll see how long you can hang on while having so much information gush into your brain everyday.'

He continued to imagine Fang Xingjian getting increasingly weaker. Then he thought of how he himself had a mental breakdown and insomnia for consecutive nights when he entered the Sacred Land with thirty-times the density. Zhou Xingwen secretly decided, 'I'll come look for him again next time. I don't believe he can hang on for long. Maybe when I come the next time, he'll be suffering from headaches and a swollen brain. There won't be a need for 500,000 then.'

Fang Xingjian had not an inkling of the idea Zhou Xingwen was thinking of. Neither could he have realised that he had forced out a first generation Miracle World harassing-type intermediary just like that.

He was in the room, holding on to a big plate of food and eating non-stop while circulating his vital energy and blood, gradually recovering the vitality of his internal organs.

Chapter 261 Lead the Way

As Fang Xingjian ate, he continued to ponder.

With regard to the primary training for Conferred Knights, what he currently knew was how to synthesise Killing techniques, increase the ether synchronization rate, and increase his level.

As for the other areas, such as tempering attributes and cultivating techniques, these were no different than from first transition Knights.

‘With regard to the training for Conferred Knights, I’ve only relied on my own conjectures and referred to past records. However, the Regional Academy can be said to be the frontline of the battlefield for Conferred Knights. The theories imparted here should all be the most advanced.

‘I should look for the chance to attend some classes and understand more about the Conferred Knights in Regional Academies as well as how they train.’

As Fang Xingjian thought about these, he continued to take big bites out of a large ferocious wild boar, producing continuous munching sounds.

Fang Xingjian should first leave the villa, look for Ferdinand, and then look into how he could earn money.

After that, he should look for some classes to attend so that he would know how to allocate the time for his various training goals. These included training his Killing techniques, training in the Sacred Land, and training to increase his ether synchronization rate.

As he continued to think about these, Fang Xingjian had already finished three roasted ferocious wild boars, an entire Bear Seizes Buffalo dish, as well as three pots of vegetable salad made from countless medicinal herbs.

He wiped his mouth, and then with a slight movement, he appeared with a flash outside the door. The changes to his force, which his sword bones had created, caused sword Qis to form as he walked. With a single step, a long sword mark would appear on the ground, as if it was slicing through the ground.

Fang Xingjian continued to walk on like this and appeared out the Sacred Land in the blink of an eye. He felt the density of ether particles was decreasing rapidly, and the scenes in his mind seemed to have changed from a 1920×1020 resolution to a 640×480 resolution, causing him to feel slightly disoriented.

However, when he passed through the Sacred Land's entrance at the next moment, he saw a young maid standing there, waiting. When she saw him, she called out, "May I ask if you're Lord Fang Xingjian?"

"That's me. What's the matter?"

As though she had not met such a young and handsome Knight before, the maid blushed and said, slightly embarrassed, "Your Divine Armor has arrived. It's the reward for the Regional Selection. The Superintendent tasked me to wait for you here so that you can collect it when you came out."

"The level 29 armor has arrived?" Fang Xingjian asked, "Where is it?"

"Please come with me. It's in the Superintendent's office. When he knew what was inside, he didn't even dare take a single step away from it even when he's eating or sleeping. He has been waiting until you finally came out today." The maid then immediately led the way.

Her footsteps were light yet powerful, comparable to an olympic champion on Earth. Clearly, even the maids in Regional Academies had put in great effort into their martial arts cultivation and had taken great amounts of nutrition.

However, to Fang Xingjian, her speed was still too slow. The next moment, she suddenly felt her body become light. She also felt a powerful arm grab her around the waist, and she was soon flying forward at great speed.

Fang Xingjian's voice tremored softly next to her ear, "Point out the way."

The young maid only felt that the arm was extremely strong and warm. Thinking of how this person was the Regional Champion, who had comprehended the seven level of mysteries of the Pantheon Monument and defeated a genius who was under the wings of a Divine level expert, her heart began to beat faster. With a soft voice, she agreed.

Very quickly, Fang Xingjian went on his way while holding onto the maid. Within a mere two minutes, he had arrived before the Administration Building which was three stories high.

The maid in his arms was like a small squirrel, and her head buried into Fang Xingjian's arms.

Fang Xingjian's voice rang out, "Have we arrived? Is it here?"

It was like the maid had just woken up from a dream, and she replied in a soft voice, "Mmm."

Suddenly, she felt his arm move a little, and she immediately reacted. To think that she had been hugging onto his arm all this time... A flush of red quickly appeared on her face. She then took two steps back and said, "I'm sorry! I'm sorry!"

However, when she lifted her head once again, Fang Xingjian was already gone.

Another maid came out and said to her with an evil grin, "Little Ru [1], who was that earlier? He's so handsome!"

Now that Fang Xingjian had completed the second transition, it was as though he had been reborn as a brand new person. With the addition of the one year he spent cultivating during his first

transition, his disposition had improved. He was now like a drawn sharp sword, and with the great transformation to his bones and muscles, he was very good looking.

Hearing her companion's teasing, Little Ru lowered her head and said, "He's Lord Fang Xingjian."

"Huh? He's that Fang Xingjian? Oh, my god, why is he so good-looking?" The maid said with her mouth agape. "So young, so good-looking... and he is even a Conferred Knight! Sigh, if only he's willing to marry me..."

Little Ru covered her mouth and laughed, "What nonsense are you talking about?"

"Nonsense?" That maid pat Little Ru on the shoulder and said, "Hmmm, who was the one acting so lasciviously early? You were grabbing onto his arm, totally unwilling to let go... What a little vixen..."

Little Ru was clearly used to the jokes the other maid usually said, so she was not too concerned. She simply laughed and retorted, "You... you're the one who is a vixen..."

As the two of them joked around, Fang Xingjian had already entered the three-story Administration Building and went to the Superintendent's office on the third floor.

The Regional Academy's Superintendent was in charge various things, including: logistics; food; hygiene; maintenance of buildings and the plants; as well as rearing of ferocious beasts.

Although these were all miscellaneous work, since they all involved Conferred Knights, it was a job everyone would fight for. The person in charge would also be responsible for supervising thousands of people, such as: the maids; servants; chefs; and gardeners

That was right. Although there were less than a hundred teachers and students altogether in the entire academy, there were a few

thousand servants serving them.

The only way they could assure that every corner in the entire academy could be cleaned at least three times daily and each meal would be filled with delicacies... was by having this many servants. No matter what the Conferred Knights asked for, the requests would be delivered within half an hour.

There might not be something called 'service spirit' in Miracle World, but all the servants would serve the Conferred Knights as if they were their masters. Moreover, they would provide greater service than anyone in the service industry on Earth.

When Fang Xingjian entered the Superintendent's office, he saw an elderly sitting behind the office desk. Beside him, there was a large metal box which was around the height of a human.

Seeing that Fang Xingjian had arrived, the old man let out a deep breath and said, "You're finally here. With this thing in my office everyday, I didn't even dare to sleep and even needed to get someone to keep watch when I go to the washroom."

The old man was the Regional Academy's Superintendent, a Knight in his sixties. He no longer had his mind on advancing his skills and had been working diligently and conscientiously on his job.

However, a couple of days ago, two Conferred Knights sent over the rewards for the Regional Selection. One of them was the level 29 armor, a Superior Divine Weapon, which was meant for Fang Xingjian.

What kind of precious item was this? It was worth a fortune.

Logically, it was extremely safe in the Regional Academy. However, the Superintendent was still had not been at ease while he guarded this armor.

Unfortunately, Fang Xingjian had been immersed in his training, and no one had been able to call him out. Therefore, the

Superintendent could only stay in his office everyday, guarding the big metal box next to him.

How torturing had this been? He had needed to restrain his curiosity toward the Divine Weapon, and yet, he had been constantly worried that someone would have their eyes on it. The Superintendent had been rather afraid the Divine Weapon would be lost while in his possession.

So, he had requested for Governor Devitt to send Conferred Knights to guard the item for a number of times. However,t Governor Devitt was very assured by the Regional Academy's security and had not given his approval.

It just showed how much pressure there had been for such a precious treasure to be guarded by a mere Knight, like him, alone.

[1]: The word 'Little' is usually added before a person's name to make it sound more endearing.

Chapter 262 Heavenly Abyss Annihilation

Armor

The Superintendent's pressure was very great, but Fang Xingjian was finally here, so he no longer had to be held responsible. While walking with great zeal, the Superintendent looked at Fang Xingjian and said, "Xingjian, you're finally here. Come, come, come. Try the armor on. Let me have a look at how it actually looks like. It's also my first time seeing a level 29 armor."

Fang Xingjian walked up to the metal box, and under the Superintendent's instructions, inserted his Knight medallion, which was hanging from his neck, into a hole of the metal box.

The entire metal box seemed to tremble slightly. Then at the next moment, as white smoke gushed out, the box was like a blooming flower. It opened up in all directions and revealed the set of armor inside.

The armor was a dark black color and included guards for his hands, arms, waist, waist, upper thighs, knees, lower thighs, as well as other parts of the body. If one were to put it on completely, it would be a black armor which covered up the entire body.

It stood upright in the metal box, as if it were a living Knight. Although it did not seem to be anything special, it had a unique aura to it.

Therefore, under the Superintendent's envious gaze, Fang Xingjian put on the pieces of the armor one by one.

At the start, Fang Xingjian had still been worried that the armor would be very heavy and thus make it impossible for him to use his specialty, the Single Sword World Subjugation. This specialty forbade him to be equipped with any armor over ten kilograms. Otherwise, Fang Xingjian would not be able to enjoy the speed increment from this specialty.

However, when he put it on, he realized that this level 29 Superior Divine Armor was light as a feather, and when he held it in his hand, it was like paper.

However, its sturdiness was not something to be undermined. Now that Fang Xingjian had completed the job transition to the Heavenly Sword Sovereign, the bones all over his body had been turned into sword bones. Each of his punches and kicks were like the slashing or piercing of a longsword. With just a slight tapping force, he would be able to slash through steel and penetrate steel armors.

However, when he tried applying strength to stroke across the surface of this armor, there was a strong metallic scratching sound, but no marks were left behind.

The Superintendent said enviously, “This armor is known as the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor and was made from the skeletal remains of Sand Country’s national hero, Domirov. It took ten years to forge and is a true treasure that doesn’t come by easily.

“It’s material is light as a feather, yet firm as a rock. Even a level 29 Divine Weapon would not be able to break it easily.”

In the blink of an eye, Fang Xingjian had put on the complete set of black Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor. Then at the next moment, the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor let out a slight tremor and turned into a layer of black liquid on Fang Xingjian’s body. It stuck onto the surface of his skin as though it was a layer of skin. Following this, the armor’s color continued to change, seeming to get gradually accustomed to Fang Xingjian’s body. In just a short moment, it changed into over ten different colors and eventually got closer and closer to the color of Fang Xingjian’s skin.

In the end, no traces of the armor could be seen at all.

Fang Xingjian moved his arms and legs, and could not feel that he was wearing an armor. This Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor

was truly amazing.

The Superintendent said enviously, “It’s said that after the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor is put on, it’ll be like putting on a layer of skin, and usually, one won’t be able to sense its existence. It will absorb sunlight, moonlight, magnetic forces, as well as heat. It’ll continue going through its metabolism process on the surface of the wearer’s body and help to nurse it. The armor will even gradually increase the physical constitution of the wearer.

“In the future, the wearer will never sweat. They will feel warm in winter and cool in summer, and there will not even be a trace of dust on their body.

“Although I heard of this a long time ago, I thought that these were merely exaggerations. To think that they were actually true...”

The Superintendent stared at Fang Xingjian’s skin and mumbled, “It has already merged onto your skin. Now, the surface of your skin already has the defensive powers of a level 29 Divine Weapon.

“And if you were to keep on wearing this in the long term... With the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor nursing your body and increasing your body’s physical qualities, you’ll still grow increasingly strong and get closer to having the qualities of a level 29 Conferred Knight even if you don’t train your body.”

Fang Xingjian tried to clench his fist and felt that this layer of skin was like a living thing. Its connection with his body was growing increasingly stronger; it was supporting his body’s metabolism, transmitting of nutrients, and strengthening his physical qualities.

The old man said, “It can even store energy from excessive food intake and use it to strengthen your body. Hehe... In the future, no matter how much you eat, you won’t need to fear that you’ll not be able to digest it.”

Fang Xingjian nodded and asked, “Does it have any other functions? Other than the defensive powers of the material itself and its ability to bind to the user, what other functions does it have?”

“Right now, the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor is still sleeping.” The Superintendent grinned and said, “This was forged from the bone remains of Sand Country’s national hero. It also contains the martial will he had accumulated over the many years.”

“Currently, it’s like the armor is in a sleeping state and thus only has the defensive powers, as well as the basic body nurturing abilities, from the material it was made from.

“It will absorb and release powers from ether particles only when it has truly awakened, unleashing the true prowess of a level 29 Divine Weapon.”

Martial will referred to the information left behind by powerful experts in ether particles. Just like the information Divine-level experts like the Melancholic Monarch had left behind in the Pantheon Monument, the martial will would not dissipate even after two hundred years had passed by.

This set of Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor had been forged from the bone remains of a level 29 expert. Naturally, the ether particles would retain a large amount of martial will, the person’s will, and memories he had before he died.

The Superintendent continued, “In order to stimulate the powers of the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor, you’ll need to be able to get the martial will, the will of Sand Country’s national hero, Domirov, to yield to you.”

Fang Xingjian knew that winning over the martial will was to be able to accept the rush of information from it and, in turn, receive the information which had been left behind in the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor.

Those were all personal information belonging to Domirov. They were gathered in the armor, and like a soul remnant, they would ceaselessly attack the people who disturbed them.

Fang Xingjian touched his skin and said, “Watch out. I’m going to try out the powers of this old ghost.”

“What? You’re going to challenge the martial will in the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor now?”

What joke was he trying to make? How long had it been since Fang Xingjian had entered the Regional Academy? The Superintendent thought that Fang Xingjian had yet to complete the job transition and was still a level 19 Knight. To be challenging the martial will of a level 29 expert under such circumstances, would it not be courting death?

Moreover, the Superintendent was still next to Fang Xingjian. If Fang Xingjian could not accept the impact of Domirov’s martial will and ended up going crazy, would he not have to suffer from the consequences too?

However, he was not aware that Fang Xingjian had the world’s best sword talent, while Fang Xingjian was very clear about this. His strong will and his brain’s ability to accept and process abilities far surpassed that of ordinary people. Otherwise, it would have been impossible for him to adapt to the high density of ether particles so quickly.

Therefore, before the Superintendent had a chance to persuade Fang Xingjian against it, Fang Xingjian trembled slightly and sent his Heaven’s Perception toward the armor.

In the next moment, a tremendous aura soared upward, and the temperature in the entire office started to rise. It was like suddenly being moved from a place with good weather to a scorching desert. The Superintendent even had the illusion that the sun was piercingly hot as it burned his skin, and there was also wind and sand brushing against his face.

At the same time, an extremely deep and strong voice emerged from Fang Xingjian's body. It was the sound the armor had created when it caused tremors in the air.

“Who's that?!”

“Who has entered my mind?!”

“Who has entered Domirov's mind?!”

The Superintendent's eyes were wide open and only reacted at the next moment. “This is the martial will's reaction? A tremendous amount of personal information gathered together to form a false persona? So, he thinks he's still alive?”

Chapter 263 Suppress

Just as Fang Xingjian was using his Heaven's Perception to get a deeper understanding of the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor, a large amount of information gushed into his brain from the armor:

Domirov practicing martial arts when he was young;

The local customs and practices of the Sand Country;

Battles of various scales;

Domirov standing out from many warriors and becoming the national hero;

Then improving his martial arts ceaselessly and gaining more power...

Domirov's life flashed passed very quickly before Fang Xingjian.

As a top level 29 warrior, a large amount of his information had been left behind in his bone remains, forming his martial will.

Then when Fang Xingjian's consciousness came into contact with these pieces of information, the latter were like cats who had smelled blood, gushing frantically toward the point of contact.

After all, for these memory shards, the brain and the human consciousness were their favorite places. As the information gushed in furiously, Fang Xingjian grabbed his head, feeling like it was about to explode.

A large amount of memory shards continued to take over the outer layer of his memory, like they were going to take over his brain. It was as though Domirov was going to be reborn in his body.

"I!" Fang Xingjian opened his mouth, and what came out was an unfamiliar voice in a language—the Sand Country's language. "Domirov!" At the same time, a scorching, boundless, and arid

aura continued to surge out from his body, as if Domirov himself had come back to life.

However, in the next moment, the Universal Sword Dominance Lunisolar mental cultivation method started to circulate at full power in Fang Xingjian's mind. His consciousness was like a wave of streaming sword Qis, slashing ceaselessly at the attacking information waves and eliminating them one by one.

This required Fang Xingjian to fight the will with his will. Once he was no longer able to stand Domirov's surge of information, the information would take over the surface of Fang Xingjian's consciousness, and it would be as though Fang Xingjian was hypnotized. Fang Xingjian's brain would think that he was Domirov, or perhaps, multiple personalities might be created.

From a certain viewpoint, it was like Domirov had come back to life. However, to Fang Xingjian, this was a disaster. The people in Miracle World referred to this as entering a state of chaos.

Therefore, when the Superintendent saw this aura soar up, worry and fear immediately flashed in his eyes, and he slowly headed for the door.

He knew that it would be useless for him to say anything to Fang Xingjian. If the pieces of information were gushing into his brain was at a speed of 100 m/s, then the speed at which information was transferred through speech was at most 3 bytes/s.

It was like the difference between a huge river and a small water pipe; there was no room for comparison. How would the Superintendent be able to persuade Fang Xingjian to stop with just words alone? The only thing he could think of now was to leave the place quickly in order to save himself. He had seen Fang Xingjian's performance in the selection and knew it was impossible for him to be a match for Fang Xingjian.

The Superintendent had to leave and look for other Conferred Knights to restrain him.

Fang Xingjian, however, did not care what the Superintendent thought. His entire consciousness was already focused on going against Domirov's martial will.

It was as though he was standing on reefs, receiving continuous waves of attacks from the information currents. Simultaneously, he was slashing out with his sword time and time again in order to turn the information currents into ash.

Relying on his willpower and brain power, which were both at a level that not many in the world had, Fang Xingjian forcefully withstood against the impact from Domirov's will. His disposition and aura also gradually went back to what it had been originally.

In the next moment, the skin all over his body went through tremors and transformations, dressing him in a set of black armor. The armor then went through a whole series of transformations, turning from the inconspicuous black armor to a faint gold-colored armor which reflected a metallic glow.

The surface of the armor, which had been joined together initially, had now become many scales joined together. It was as if he was wearing a layer of dragon scales.

The surface of the armor seemed as though it had turned into a crystalized mirror surface. The glow it reflected was like a blaze of flames jumping about on the armor itself.

However, Fang Xingjian felt as though countless concealed spaces had opened up throughout his body. Various energies in the world, including radiation, magnetism, solar and lunar energies, as well as various physical heat energies... all of them were drawn out violently from void spaces and channeled into his body.

The vital energy and blood throughout his body were like boiling water, making him let out a loud shout unbearably. The scale armor all over his body stood up, trembling the air, followed by a series of loud cries.

Countless energies soared out from his body incessantly. Fang Xingjian felt that his attributes seemed to be growing at a crazy rate.

Concurrently, streams of a faint white glow appeared from Fang Xingjian's limbs and various parts of his body, forming a geometrical figure.

They were various force fields which allowed one to speed up, experience an increase in strength, adjust one's accuracy, or experience automated calibration. These force fields once again increased Fang Xingjian's damage prowess.

Sensing the upheaving transformations within his body, Fang Xingjian subconsciously wanted to try out the powers of this armor. So, he casually threw out a punch toward the front.

His strength had already been very strong to begin with. However, now, with his sword bones, the power from each of his punches was sufficient to create a stream of sword Qi and split open a gap in an ordinary wall.

However, after activating his Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor, his strength continued to soar. His punch was launched out through space, and the violent strength turned into sword force, tearing the air apart. It then transformed into a stream of sword Qi, which was three meters wide and a hundred meters long, and soared toward the horizon. The sword Qi slashed the roof of the office apart, revealing a large stretch of the sky.

Such power...

Was this the power of a level 29 top notch Conferred Knight?

That each punch and kick would have such prowess...?

However, Fang Xingjian quickly realized that his consciousness was swaying and yet Domirov's martial will continued to attack him endlessly, as if wanting to kick him out from this body.

Then Fang Xingjian released a long breath suddenly, breaking off

the connection between his will and Domirov's martial will. In the next moment, the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor continued to change, degenerate, then it turned into a layer of skin once again.

Fang Xingjian could also sense that his body was weak, as if it was deflated.

In actuality, he had not become weaker than before. It was just that after having escaped from the overwhelming state of the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor in activation, comparing the state before and after, he felt that his body was very weak. This weakness was just a delusion.

As he released a breath, Fang Xingjian once again looked at his body and then thought to himself, 'Compared to a true expert, my body is still too weak.'

'Moreover, the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor only has a maximum of 50% of the Conferred Knight's powers.'

He clenched his fists together tightly, craving more and more for power.

'However, before I reach level 29, this Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor is truly a powerful defensive tool. It is a pity that it requires one to withstand the impact from Domirov's martial will. With my current martial will, I can only hang on for over ten seconds. If I continue for any longer, there'll be a danger of me being taken down.'

'Ordinary Conferred Knights may not be able to withstand the impact from his martial will at all.'

Fang Xingjian decided in his heart that he would strengthen his sword arts and mental cultivation method ceaselessly. With a greater mastery of his skills, he would gain more confidence and the development of his brain would be stronger as well, allowing him to be capable of going against the impact from the martial

will.

When the time came that he would be able to fully suppress Domirov's martial will, he would be able to use this Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor freely. It would be unlike how he was currently, needing to stop after using it for over ten seconds and then continuing after resting for a couple of hours.

Just as Fang Xingjian was contemplating this, a voice rang out in the office, "Xingjian? Are you alright?"

Chapter 264 Effects

The Superintendent looked at Fang Xingjian, feeling both worried and terrified.

If it was not because Fang Xingjian had become this year's Regional Champion and his performance had far surpassed that of the Regional Champions from previous years...

Or because Fang Xingjian had stopped the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor he was wearing...

The Superintendent would definitely not take the initiative to stay behind and ask this question.

Hearing the Superintendent's question, Fang Xingjian finally lifted his head, showing an apologetic expression as he said, "I'm sorry, I've destroyed your office."

"It's fine, it's fine." With that, the Superintendent heaved a sigh of relief, grateful there were no major issues. However, he then immediately looked at Fang Xingjian with a curious and envious gaze and asked, "You subdued the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor?"

"Subdued? How could it be so easy? It contains the powerful will of the level 29 top notch expert, Domirov. This is not something that I can subdue and suppress at the moment. The most I can do now is to withstand the impact from his will and use it for just a short moment."

Fang Xingjian thought to himself, 'A level 29 armor is already so powerful. Then if it was a level 30 Divine Armor, the ultimate equipment which is said to have 30% of the powers of a Divine level expert... how powerful would it be?'

For some reason, when the Superintendent heard Fang Xingjian's words, he seemed to heave another sigh of relief inwardly. However, his gaze was still filled with envy. "That's already very

remarkable. To be able to use a level 29 armor for a short while... You should be able to utilize have the powers of a level 29 expert?"

"It's not that easy." Fang Xingjian smiled and said, "Level 29 experts are strong in various aspects. Killing techniques, specialties, attributes, Waves, and mental cultivation methods... not one of them can be excluded.

"The Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor only strengthens my five attributes. As for the other abilities, I'll still need to think about them and continue to keep fighting against Domirov's martial will in order to be capable of truly bringing out the best in them."

Naturally, the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor naturally did not just strengthen one's physical capability and strength. However, many of its abilities were not things Fang Xingjian could grasp fully at the moment.

Despite this, his performance was already very commendable. At least, during the ten over seconds he had been using the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor, there would probably be no Conferred Knight of level 25 or below who would be a match for him.

Fang Xingjian said apologetically, "The issue with the ceiling is my fault. I'll get someone to send over money for compensation."

Fang Xingjian was not only the Regional Champion but also a favorite with Governor Devitt. Even if the First Prince did not take any action against him, Fang Xingjian was still not someone who he, a mere level 19 Knight, would be able to go against.

Although he knew that Fang Xingjian was just trying to be polite, Fang Xingjian's words gave him a really good feeling anyway. "No need, no need. It's nothing much. There's no need to think too much into it."

"It's something that must be done. But I still have something to attend to today and will need to take my leave."

Although the Superintendent had appeared very submissive, Fang Xingjian still kept up the basic courtesy he should be showing. He knew that although someone like the Superintendent, who managed the logistical work in the entire Regional Academy, might not be able to offer him great help, he would be able to create trouble for him easily.

If a few polite words could be exchanged for the goodwill of others, then there was nothing which could be more worth it.

After bidding the smiling Superintendent goodbye, Fang Xingjian headed out of the academy. He was going to look for Ferdinand and discuss about how to make money. After all, he was now the Regional Champion and also the person who had defeated Hoult, who was under the wings of a Divine level expert.

Going by the theories from Earth, Fang Xingjian's name was considered quite a marketable product in Great Western Region. If they were to work on this, it would quite easy to earn money even if he were to just set up a martial arts class.

However, he needed to spend long hours in the Sacred Land for his cultivation. Therefore, he could only use his name and not actually spend too much time on the money-earning activities. This was something he needed to discuss with Ferdinand.

Fang Xingjian arrived at the inn where he had agreed to meet Ferdinand and knocked on the door. When Ferdinand came out and saw that it was Fang Xingjian, he broke into an excited smile.

Then he shouted to Anthony and Robert who were behind the door, "Why aren't you guys coming out? The person you have been yearning day and night to meet has finally arrived."

Although Ferdinand had been able to remain calm while Fang Xingjian had been gone for over ten days... to Anthony and Robert, this had been torture.

After all, they had made up their minds to drop out from the

Prefectural Academy in order to follow Fang Xingjian to the Great Western City.

If Fang Xingjian were to forget about them... Considering their inability to return to the Prefectural Academy and thus having no official cultivation resources provided to them, they would only be able to seek out a government sector or join some factions. If things were to come down to that, their future would become ambiguous.

Therefore, when they saw Fang Xingjian at this moment, their gazes were filled with both unease and excitement.

They felt uneasy as they did not know what Fang Xingjian would be doing from now on and what the future would be like. Despite this, they felt excited because with Fang Xingjian's performance and talent, he should be able to make his own path in this world.

However, Ferdinand did not care about their emotions and just went straight to the point, "I want to earn money. Ferdinand, what are your thoughts on this?"

"Of course, I'll agree to it 100%." He took out a stack of documents from his room and tossed them to Fang Xingjian while saying, "I've done the research. There are already over five thousand aristocrats in the entire Great Western City, with about eight hundred of them ranging from eight to fifteen years old. How big is this target group? If we were to set up a class, we would be able to bring in four thousand gold every month even if we were to charge each person five gold a month.

"Moreover, Xingjian, with your value, there's no way that we can charge them so cheaply at only five gold."

"Five gold is considered cheap?" Anthony retorted. Before he became a Knight, five gold had been sufficient as his living expenses for an entire year, even if he were to have spent his days enjoying life in great indulgence.

However, Ferdinand smiled with contempt, “These are all aristocrats, so they aren’t short of such a small sum of money. Moreover, what kind of status does Xingjian have now? He’s this year’s Regional Champion, with outstanding performance which has gone unseen in the many decades past. If we were only to charge them five gold each, there would be people who would doubt the quality of our class.”

Anthony asked, “Then how much do you think we should be charging?”

“At least twenty gold.” Looking at Anthony’s bulging eyeballs, Ferdinand continued to say, “Don’t tell me that you find it expensive. Xingjian has comprehended all seven levels of the Pantheon Monument’s mysteries. How much is this worth alone? I think that everyone would fight for a chance to attend this class at twenty gold.”

Putting Anthony aside, how much money could they earn if they were to charge each person twenty gold per month?

Fang Xingjian shook his head and said, “Ferdinand, I don’t plan on guiding the students myself.”

“Ahh!”

Looking at Ferdinand’s astonished gaze, Fang Xingjian said, “However, I can write down what I have learnt from my cultivation. You guys can use the things written to guide the other students.

“I’ll be writing down the detailed cultivation means for five sets of basic nurturing sword techniques. You guys can just follow what I write down.”

Fang Xingjian had also given it much thought as it was impossible for him to head out everyday and guide students in their cultivation.

However, with his current mastery in sword arts and

understanding of the physical body, he would be able to come up with a set of extremely detailed teaching materials.

This was especially so since he could now completely capable of writing down the various possible encounters with each move and stance, while taking into consideration the various details of the cultivation.

While it was not comparable to the effects of having him provide guidance personally, the effects would definitely still be stronger than being taught by other teachers.

As long as Ferdinand, Anthony, and Robert could memorize the contents and provide guidance based on the materials, there should not be much problems.

However, Ferdinand stroked his chin and said, “Xingjian, although your talent is unrivalled, if you’re not the one providing the guidance and it’s just cultivating with reference to your concluded experience instead, the attraction would not be comparable to the previous idea.”

“Then what other ways do you have?”

Ferdinand licked his lips. At the mention of earning money, his brain starting to circulate at a great speed. He said, “If you can bring up your reputation even more, then we shouldn’t set up a martial arts class. You can just write your own book and put it up for sale. What do you think?”

Chapter 265 Reputation and Money

“Reputation? Publish books?”

“That’s right, reputation. Xingjian, although you’re the Regional Champion and a genius who has solved all seven levels of the Pantheon Monument’s mysteries, your reputation is still merely that of a talent and a student.

“Therefore, they’ll be willing to sign up to receive your guidance.

“But if it’s only your summary, and for them to practice according to your methods... it would probably be much worse. You might as well publish a book which talks about your journey to becoming the Regional Champion, your biography, and what you’ve learned from your cultivation. There’ll definitely be a lot of people who would buy it.”

Ferdinand smiled, “By the way, Xingjian, do you want to become an authority in sword arts? To research sword arts?”

“Authority in sword arts?” Fang Xingjian started to think about how pleasing it sounded, but his gaze reflected a total confidence. Putting aside his sword arts mastery, just with his Sword Specialist specialty, his Unparalleled Sword Intent specialty, and the Heavenly Sword Imprint specialty, the maximum level of his sword techniques had been further increased by ten levels.

Moreover, in the first place, he had the world’s best sword arts talent and had cultivated over one hundred sets of sword techniques. Even a level 29 Conferred Knight would not be able to proclaim to be an authority in sword arts before Fang Xingjian.

However, Ferdinand stared into Fang Xingjian’s eyes, and when he discovered the confidence in Fang Xingjian’s eyes, he smiled. “Only when you’ve become an authority in the area of sword arts, when no one else will retort your words in the area of sword arts and when everything you say is taken as the absolute truth...

Forget about conducting classes, you'll be able to sell any books at sky high prices.

“You would be just like Hoppes from your Regional Academy. He's the authority in sword arts in the Great Western Region. Any simple words he says will be studied in detail by countless swordsmen. The sword techniques he created... Just by authorizing other academies to use them, it would bring him a huge sum of money every year.

“In the whole Great Western City, people who want to become his disciple can form a line from the east gate all the way to the west gate.”

‘Hoppes?’ Fang Xingjian thought to himself. Was that not the old man who taught him the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash? He had not expected the old man's reputation to be so great.

Ferdinand continued, “Of course, Xingjian, although your talent is unrivalled, it's not easy to become an authority in sword arts. We'll still need to take it step by step, slowly maintaining and building up your reputation.

“If you want to research sword arts, based on the current trends in the study of martial arts, the most popular and advanced area is the research of specific martial techniques. Regardless if it's finding out a new synthesis combination or creating a set of new martial arts, it'll be able to build up your reputation.”

The idea of finding out a new synthesis combination referred to testing out a synthesis combination which had not appeared in history nor recorded in the Regional Academy. Of course, the prerequisite was that the new synthesis had to be powerful enough. Otherwise, even if the synthesis was successful, not many people would give it much attention.

However, such things depended too much on luck, and there were tens of thousands of skill varieties. It was tougher than scaling the heavens to be able to find an effective and powerful

synthesis combination.

Usually, only those level 29 top notch experts would be able to come up with a conjecture of the results based on the traits of two skills. Moreover, they had an ether synchronization rate of 100%, and their efficiency would be raised by a lot, allowing them to explore new skills continuously.

Despite this, for strong experts who needed to train a technique for half a year, or sometimes even for one to two years, time was still not enough.

This was even though they were already much faster in comparison to ordinary people, who would need to take ten or even over ten years to be able to bring a technique to the maximum level.

As for creating new skills, the difficulty was even higher. It required one to have a deep understanding toward the human body and the ether particles. The person must not only be able to display the techniques but also be able to understand the deeper principles behind them.

While Fang Xingjian might be able to create a few sets of Nurturing and Training techniques easily, it was of no use. Too many Nurturing and Training techniques were repetitive. Clearly, what people needed the most were new and powerful Killing techniques.

However, Fang Xingjian stroked his chin and gave it some thought. Although his Rebirth Sword Technique was also a Nurturing technique, it was from a combination of one hundred sets of sword techniques. He did not believe that there would be anyone in this world who had synthesized so many Nurturing sword techniques before.

While it was impossible for him to share the synthesis combination for the Rebirth Sword Technique, if he were to come up with a detailed cultivating method and report it as a self-created

technique, it would build up his reputation by a lot. It was because the Rebirth Sword Technique's efficiency was definitely greater than any Nurturing sword technique in Miracle World.

He went into deep thought for a while before asking suddenly, "Right, you mentioned earlier that after Hoppes created his own techniques, he authorized it to other academies?"

"That's right. He created new sword techniques and had no reason to give it to other people for free. Neither did anyone dare to blatantly spread around a Conferred Knight's sword technique. However, Regional Academies, Prefectural Academies, or even the National Academy can purchase the rights from him.

"As long as they pay him the royalties, they will be able to teach the sword techniques he created in their academies. The royalties will have to continue to be paid until the person who invented it dies.

"Hehe, do you know that the Radiant Light Sword Technique you practiced was created by Hoppes?"

"The Radiant Light Sword Technique?" Fang Xingjian blinked before continuing to ask Ferdinand, "How much in royalties did the KIRST Academy have to pay Hoppes each year for the Radiant Light Sword Technique?"

Ferdinand gave it some thought and said, "I think our academy paid an annual fee of two hundred gold, with no limits to the number of people who can have access to it."

'Two hundred gold yearly?' Fang Xingjian thought secretly to himself.

There were a total of twelve academies in the Great Western Region, and if they were all to purchase the rights to the Radiant Light Sword Technique, it would amount to 2,400 gold per year. Additionally, with there being eight regions in the Empire, with just the Radiant Light Sword Technique, Hoppes would have an

income of over 15,000 gold each year.

This was still because the Radiant Light Sword Technique was not powerful enough. Fang Xingjian believed that the royalties for the more powerful sword techniques would definitely be higher.

This was the first time Fang Xingjian had known about such things. He looked at Ferdinand and asked, “Who is in charge of handling the issues with the royalties?”

“Of course, it’s the Empire and the Knight Association. 10% of the royalties must be paid to them.” Ferdinand looked at Fang Xingjian and asked, “Xingjian, are you thinking of creating your own sword technique?”

Fang Xingjian shook his head and answered, “I’m not thinking of it. I’ve already created a sword technique—a Nurturing sword technique.”

Ferdinand, who had become extremely excited, immediately appeared disappointed upon hearing that it was a Nurturing sword technique. It was too easy for the effects of Nurturing techniques to clash with another, and there was not much room for creativity. Usually, the ones available in academies were free, and the people, who created them, had all died. Who would be willing to pay for such things when there were plenty of similar versions of them around?

“Nurturing technique...” Ferdinand shook his head and said, “Nurturing techniques would probably be hard to sell out. There aren’t many academies who’d be willing to purchase new Nurturing techniques.

“If only it’s a Killing technique... That way, even if it’s not that powerful, it can be sold with a pricetag and can also build up your reputation.”

However, Fang Xingjian smiled and said, “My Nurturing technique is quite good. Oh, right. Where can I register my newly

created technique?” What a joke. A level 30 Rebirth Sword Technique would be able to provide one with a total of 20,000 potential points daily. This was, after all, a super Nurturing technique which combined over a hundred Nurturing techniques.

Even if a level 10 Rebirth Sword Technique would only be able to provide a few thousand points, that would already be ten times or a hundred times more than what ordinary Nurturing techniques could provide.

He had also wanted to invent his own Killing technique, but the synthesis of the Supreme Mistwind Sword and Radiant Light Sword Technique was too simple. There would definitely have been people who had already discovered it.

In fact, when Fang Xingjian went to the library to check it out, his guess had been proven to be right. The synthesis combination of his Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash had long been discovered by someone else.

Ferdinand gave it some thought and said, “Actually, there’s one in your Regional Academy. This is something huge. You’re better off looking for a teacher in the Sword Arts Department to help you with the registration. It’s a place with greater authority as compared to some other places.”

However, Ferdinand did not hold much hope for Fang Xingjian’s nurturing sword technique. He was still hoping that Fang Xingjian could write a book about his cultivation experience or write a biography. Taking in the fact that the Regional Selection had just ended, it would definitely sell well.

Therefore, he said, “Then are you still going to write the book?”

“I will. But I’ll just come up with the outline. Help me get someone to go through the rest for me.” Fang Xingjian had already decided that after he returned, he would start summarizing the cultivation method for the Rebirth Sword Technique. After that, he would look for a teacher to help register the technique and see if

it could be sold to other academies for royalties.

Fang Xingjian was still very confident with his Rebirth Sword Technique.

Chapter 266 Cultivation and Heading Out

Fang Xingjian then continued to discuss with Ferdinand about publishing books and setting up the martial arts class. Afterwards, he left the inn and headed back to the Regional Academy.

There were too many things he had to do following this.

One of them was that he had to come up with a cultivation method for the Rebirth Sword Technique. Another was that he had to raise all of his sword techniques to the maximum level, since they now had the potential to be trained and raised another ten levels higher. He also had to synthesize the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash, come up with the outline for his book, and raise his ether synchronization rate.

If he had any spare time, Fang Xingjian was also thinking of spending some time attending some of the classes in the Regional Academy.

Fang Xingjian's transition into becoming a Conferred Knight seemed to be a brand new start. However, the things he needed to do had not decreased, but rather, they had gotten harder.

Therefore, Fang Xingjian once again returned to his training room in the Sacred Land. First, he started training with the Rebirth Sword Technique. He wanted to clear the remaining ten levels to the Rebirth Sword Technique and reached the unprecedented level 40.

Fang Xingjian casually picked up a wooden sword meant for training. In that instant, there seemed to be countless ether particles surging over from the void, causing the wooden sword to release a mercury-like glow.

He had already been strengthened by the Heavenly Sword Sovereign's specialty and become a level 19 Inferior Divine Weapon.

Then as Fang Xingjian held onto the wooden sword, he started performing the Rebirth Sword Technique, one move at a time.

The Rebirth Sword Technique had been created from Fang Xingjian's combination of over a hundred sets of Nurturing sword techniques and seemed to have incorporated all the Nurturing sword techniques in the world. It would train up each and every spot of his body. Regardless if it was his muscle, bones, organs, or nerves... they all continued to be nourished ceaselessly by various nutrients under his circulation.

Consecutive booms rang out from Fang Xingjian's body. The deep sounds were created because the blood flow in his body was being circulated incessantly, gushing about like a raging river.

Just like that, Fang Xingjian continued to practice his Rebirth Sword Technique non-stop, unceasingly comprehending all of its fine details. Moreover, as he was in an environment with a hundred times the ether particles density, he felt that it was almost as if there were sword theories gushing into his mind at all times, filling his mind with inspiration.

With every swing of his sword, he seemed to be able to gain new comprehensions toward sword arts.

With the boosts from his Heaven's Perception, one hundred times the ether particles density, his topmost sword talent, Genius Swordsmanship, Sword Specialist, level 1 Unparalleled Sword Intent, Darkness Sword Sense, and all the other series of advantages he held... Fang Xingjian's sword mastery advanced at a tremendous speed. His comprehension of the Rebirth Sword Technique also increased as he kept going.

He continued practicing just like this, having a meal after every two hours before stimulating his organs and blood to digest the food. Then, he would continue to practice the Rebirth Sword Technique for two hours, storing the nutrients, energy, and essence as potentials in his body.

Concurrently as Fang Xingjian practiced, he extracted the essence of the Rebirth Sword Technique. Starting from the second day, he would stop occasionally as he practiced and write down notes in a small book at the side, recording the cultivation method for the Rebirth Sword Technique.

The days passed by. At night, everyday after his training Fang Xingjian would be able to sense that the vital energy and blood in his body was stimulated by the training of the Rebirth Sword Technique. Countless potentials were contained within, as if he were a bomb which could explode at any moment. He was storing a tremendous amount of power.

Therefore, he would practice the new Nine-Headed Dragon Sword Technique a couple of times at night to convert the potential points into attributes. Then as his boiling vital energy and blood started to calm down, his attributes would continue to increase bit by bit.

In the end, after continuing with the cycle for twenty-four hours throughout five consecutive days, Fang Xingjian finally pushed the Rebirth Sword Technique to level 40.

At level 40, the Rebirth Sword Technique came with an exceptionally powerful effect.

When he practiced the Rebirth Sword Technique, not only could he circulate his vital energy and blood to accumulate the potentials, he could facilitate for exchanges of energies between the ether particles inside and outside his body. This would then increase the efficiency at which he accumulated potential points, and he no longer needed to rely only on food to gain nutrients.

With that, the level 40 Rebirth Sword Technique could now increase Fang Xingjian's potential points by 30,000 daily, which was a huge increase from before.

Therefore, after this period of cultivation, Fang Xingjian's attributes had now become:

Strength 83+6

Agility 192+6

Reaction 87

Endurance 60

Flexibility 60

Currently, Fang Xingjian was starting to pursue a balance in his attributes. After transitioning into the Heavenly Sword Sovereign, he would be relying solely on his sword arts talent in the future. He no longer pursued extremely high attributes and started to make up for his weaknesses instead.

By the time Fang Xingjian had trained his Rebirth Sword Technique to level 40, he had also finished writing his sword arts manual. Picking it up, he looked at the cultivation method he had recorded for the Rebirth Sword Technique. There were over 20,000 words, and it was much more complicated than any other Nurturing sword techniques.

This was because there were too many aspects involved with the cultivation method for the Rebirth Sword Technique. It included the control of one's bones, muscles, tendons, veins, vital energy, and blood... and it was not as simple as ordinary Nurturing sword techniques.

However, since he had succeeded, Fang Xingjian planned to register it and see if it could be sold, and then put it up for other academies to purchase and to pay him royalties.

After all, ordinary people would not be able to train it to level 40 like he had done. Selling this sword technique would not be a threat to him at all. Instead, it would bring him a tremendous amount of money. He could start cultivating Mystical Prints, increase ether synchronization rate, and even purchase another level 29 Divine longsword.

In order to put what he thought of to action, Fang Xingjian stood

up, stepped out of the door, and headed out of the Sacred Land.

However, unlike how he had done previously, he was no longer slashing into the ground with just a few steps and, in turn, creating sword marks.

After a few days of training his Rebirth Sword Technique, not only had his potential increased and his attributes tempered, he had also gotten a better control and deeper understanding of his own body and strength.

Fang Xingjian moved forward at a dazzling speed, and in the blink of an eye, he appeared at the entrance to the Sacred Land. He walked about around the school casually, asking everyone he met for directions to the office for the Sword Arts Department and then headed over.

The Sword Arts Department was a two-storey building. Although it was an office, the teachers in the department were either just in name or were not in the school for most parts of the year. Otherwise, they were busy with their own cultivation and research for their own sword arts research group, with only a few coming back to handle the administrative work.

However, when Fang Xingjian arrived at the entrance to the Sword Arts Department, he saw the maid, Little Ru, who had delivered the message to him the previous time.

Little Ru was cleaning up the office, and when she saw Fang Xingjian, she blushed slightly. However, the blush faded off very quickly, and she took the initiative to walk up to Fang Xingjian, asking, “Lord Xingjian, what has brought you here to the Sword Arts Department?”

Before Fang Xingjian could reply, someone came over while shouting, “Xingjian! Xingjian!”

When Zhou Xingwen saw Fang Xingjian, he quickly greeted him. So, Fang Xingjian had no choice but to stop as well. He looked at

Zhou Xingwen and asked, “You seemed to quite well-informed?”

Zhou Xingwen smiled and replied, “It’s nothing much. I just have a few friends around.”

Fang Xingjian could not be bothered chatting with him and went straight to the point, “Why, is Wang Tiangang willing to pay one million gold now?”

When he heard this, Zhou Xingwen’s expression immediately collapsed. He said, “How’s that possible? This isn’t the reason why I’ve come to look for you today. Look at this.”

He passed a small bag to Fang Xingjian. Then Fang Xingjian’s nose twitched slightly, and uncontrollably, his throat quivered a little bit.

Zhou Xingwen smiled and said, “I’ve heard that you, Xingjian, have three things you love, namely collecting sword techniques, practicing sword arts, and good food.

“I bought this specialty specially from the Western Sea for you to try.”

Little Ru looked at the two Conferred Knights with great curiosity as she listened in on their conversation. When she heard the words ‘one million gold’, she stared with her eyes wide open.

Even in the Great Western City, ordinary commoner residences would cost at most fifty gold.

Therefore, one gold was a huge sum of money to Little Ru. One million gold was simply an astronomical sum.

How could they possibly have so much money? One million gold... What item could be sold for such a huge amount of money?

Chapter 267 Sending Gifts and Registering

Zhou Xingwen opened up the bag happily to reveal a gift box. The entire gift box was exuded cold air. He opened it carefully to unveil a small bowl, placed amidst large blocks of ice and filled with black pearl-like items.

As Zhou Xingwen smiled and looked at the curious Little Ru, he introduced it proudly,

“This is the caviar made using the eggs of Ice Shuttle Sturgeons, a type of ferocious fish found in the Western Sea.

“The Ice Shuttle Sturgeon is a precious fish from the Western Sea, and in the entire Western Sea, there are only two places that supply this. The highest quality caviar must be made from the eggs extracted from Ice Shuttle Sturgeons which weighed at least 20 jin or more. Each year, only about 30 jin of such caviar is produced.

“If you don’t have strong connections, there’s no way that you’ll be able to get your hands on it.”

Each egg appeared round and full. Exuding a faint golden glow, they looked just like small black pearls.

Little Ru asked curiously, “How do you eat this stuff?”

Zhou Xingwen closed the box, smiled, and said, “You can have it together with seafood, noodles, or even have it with bread as a snack. The great texture of the Ice Shuttle Sturgeon’s caviar makes it the king of all caviar. It’s cooling and refreshing, without any fishy stench. With an incomparably delicious taste, it is a delicacy of the human world.”

As he said this, he gulped unconsciously and then went on to say, “And the Ice Shuttle Sturgeon itself is a level 19 ferocious beast. If you eat its caviar, it’ll moisturize your skin, increase the defensive abilities of your skin’s surface and its ability to fight against cold and heat. It’s said that after eating the Ice Shuttle Sturgeon’s

caviar, you'll never have wrinkles in your entire life."

Hearing this, Little Ru's eyes immediately lit up. She stared at the caviar and asked, "Then how much is this Ice Shuttle Sturgeon's caviar?"

Zhou Xingwen looked at Little Ru. He would usually not give a hoot about a maid like her, however, he felt she looked quite pretty with her innocent-looking face and great figure. Additionally, she had a well-rounded bosom which could not be concealed by her maid uniform. Any man who saw her would probably have wicked thoughts.

In particular, seeing her standing together with Fang Xingjian... Zhou Xingwen was not sure if Fang Xingjian was interested in her. Therefore, he spoke unconsciously in a polite tone, "This isn't a matter of money. Of course, if you want to talk about the price, the 500 grams here should cost about one thousand gold."

When Little Ru heard the price for the Ice Shuttle Sturgeon's caviar, she drew in a deep breath. That sum of money would allow a person to purchase one of the best manors at the exterior of the Great Western City.

However, considering how it came from a level 19 ferocious beast and had the ability to strengthen one's attributes and improve one's skin conditions, she felt the price was not unexpected.

However, to her, it was still much too expensive.

However, Fang Xingjian did not stand on ceremony and accepted the Ice Shuttle Sturgeon's caviar. Since Zhou Xingwen had gone to so much trouble and had been so attentive to where Fang Xingjian went and what he liked... even to the extent of specially searching for good ingredients for food... Zhou Xingwen was considered to be very sincere.

Therefore, Fang Xingjian smiled slightly and said, "The Ice Shuttle Sturgeon's caviar is not bad. Let's see... we can reduce the

one million gold by one thousand.”

Inwardly, Zhou Xingwen coughed up some blood. He felt that this Fang Xingjian was a truly stingy person who was unwilling to spare even the smallest amount of money.

Zhou Xingwen smiled helplessly and changed the topic, asking, “Xingjian, why have you come to the Sword Arts Department?”

Little Ru was still staring at that extremely valuable Ice Shuttle Sturgeon’s caviar, but when she heard Zhou Xingwen’s question, she also turned to look at Fang Xingjian.

Looking at Fang Xingjian now, she felt that he seemed to appear even more handsome than before. His great power, mysterious disposition, and the food he ate which easily cost a fortune... all of these encompassed the Fang Xingjian in Little Ru’s eyes with a layer of light.

Fang Xingjian walked on as he said, “I’ve created a set of sword technique and am here to register it.”

Hearing that, Zhou Xingwen’s eyes lit up and he asked, “What sword technique is that?”

“I call it the Rebirth Sword Technique. It’s a Nurturing sword technique.”

“Oh, Nurturing sword technique...” A hint of disparage flashed past Zhou Xingwen’s eyes. “If it’s a Killing sword technique that has a good effect, then there might be a market for it.”

“But recently, the duplication of Nurturing sword techniques has been too high, and it’s usually sufficient for an ordinary person to practice about five to six sets of them. No one would continue picking up Nurturing sword techniques of which the effects are replicated for nothing.”

Fang Xingjian appeared to have understood the disparage in Zhou Xingwen’s eyes. He merely took the caviar and left. His Nurturing sword technique was not something which ordinary people could

to understand.

Zhou Xingwen gave it some thought and followed after him. It was a good chance to build up a good relationship with Fang Xingjian.

The matter with the Sacred Land involved hundreds of thousands of gold and was something that tugged at his heart. Once the deal was closed, even if he were to get a 3% commission, it would bring him tens of thousands of gold.

Moreover, Wang Tiangang had promised Zhou Xingwen that once he had gotten his hands on the rights to this piece of Sacred Land with the highest level of density, he would lend it to Zhou Xingwen to use for a period of time. This made the deal even better.

Thinking of the great future awaiting him, Zhou Xingwen continued to talk as he followed Fang Xingjian to the office for registering his sword technique.

An old man was sitting in the chair, dozing off. Fang Xingjian knocked on the door and said, "I want to register a new sword technique."

The old man rubbed his eyes, threw a glance at Fang Xingjian and asked, "New sword technique? Wait a while, the person who checks the techniques is not here. I'll call him over."

Fang Xingjian nodded and sat down to wait. Zhou Xingwen could not help but ask, "Xingjian, have you brought the manual? Why don't you let me have a look? Maybe I'll be able to gain some enlightenment as well."

Although Zhou Xingwen had taken up bare-handed martial arts, having reached the level of Conferred Knights, looking at Nurturing techniques of other martial styles was of no problem to him at all.

Fang Xingjian tossed the manual to Zhou Xingwen, who caught it

and started looking through it.

However, upon one look, his feelings of disparage grew even stronger. It was because he noticed that this Rebirth Sword Technique was simply a great hodgepodge, throwing in everything that Nurturing techniques could cover.

To him, this was merely a sword technique which combined many pieces of different sword techniques together as one. By randomly piecing all these different things together, it would not be strange if there were repercussions.

Zhou Xingwen did not finish reading and returned it to Fang Xingjian with a smile. Zhou Xingwen then said, “Not bad, Xingjian. You must have taken references from quite a number of Nurturing techniques.”

Fang Xingjian nodded and said, “I’ve combined the fortes of various techniques. The effect is very good. It far surpasses that of ordinary Nurturing sword techniques.”

Although Fang Xingjian was speaking the truth, to Zhou Xingwen, it seemed like Fang Xingjian was just boasting shamelessly. However, he could not retort openly and just smiled, without saying a word. He would just wait for the teacher, who would be checking through the manual, to criticize Fang Xingjian angrily.

About half an hour later, a middle-aged man, with golden beard and hair as well as the grandeur of a lion, walked out. He looked at Fang Xingjian and asked, “You’re the one who wants to register a new technique?”

“That’s right.”

The man who looked like a lion said, “My name is Leon. I’m Master Hoppes’ disciple. Have you brought the manual? Let me take a look at it first. If there’s no problem, I’ll find a time to submit it for you.”

Fang Xingjian had answered very casually. However, Zhou Xingwen, who was by Fang Xingjian's side, was already standing up and bowing politely.

It was because the other party was a senior student in the Sword Arts Department, Leon, who was ranked seventh in the academy. He was a disciple to Hoppes, who had taught Fang Xingjian the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash. Leon had spent many years in Hoppes' sword arts team, and both his abilities and theories were extremely strong.

Therefore, Fang Xingjian passed the manual to him, and Leon started to flip through it casually.

Chapter 268 Registration and Cultivation

Leon was a member of Hoppes' sword arts team and was also considered to be Hoppes' disciple.

To have this identity, it naturally showed that the level of his sword arts had far surpassed that of most ordinary students.

Additionally, the reason why Hoppes was not the one who came to check the manual himself was because he already had to attend to heaps of work daily.

A sword arts master like Hoppes would have to research countless sword arts theory daily, conduct numerous experiments, and look through loads of documents. There was no way he would still have the time to check through every student's discovery.

Most of the time, the checks would be conducted by the students under him, and only the manuals which were exceptionally outstanding would be submitted to him.

In fact, after enrolling into the academy, other than when the students picked out one of the Eight Prized Techniques of the West to learn, most people would not be able to see the great masters like Hoppes for many years.

However, although Leon was also a member of the sword arts team, he was not as busy as Hoppes and still had some time to concern himself with the matters in the outside world. He knew that Fang Xingjian was this year's Regional Champion and the person who had comprehended the seven levels of the Pantheon Monument's mysteries.

Therefore, Leon patiently took a glance through the sword arts manual Fang Xingjian had written. However, upon one look, a hint of disdain flashed in his eyes, and he came to the same conclusion as Zhou Xingwen.

Leon had come to the conclusion that this was a sword technique

which had been pieced together using a collection of many parts and had drawn reference from countless other techniques.

Straightening up his expression, Leon looked at Fang Xingjian and said, “I’ve received this new sword technique. I’ll take a good look through it and check against the materials in the library during the next week or so. If there aren’t any problems, I’ll register the sword technique for you.

“However, as for whether anyone will pick up this new sword technique or even purchase the rights to use it, I won’t know.”

With that, Leon threw a look at Fang Xingjian before saying subconsciously, “But, young man, it’s still better to be down to earth in your training and take one step at a time. It’s meaningless to do something like try to increase the number of self-created sword arts.”

After saying that, Leon left.

Fang Xingjian fell into a short daze. However, he had confidence in his Rebirth Sword Technique. Even if the person who checked it did not like it, as long as it entered the sword arts archives, then all the academies and certain special factions in the entire Empire would be notified.

This meant that after new techniques appeared and were accepted into the Empire’s archives, they would first be seen by the Headmasters of various academies and the leaders of certain unique groups. They would then decide if they wished to bring in or purchase the techniques.

Fang Xingjian believed that there would definitely be someone who would recognize its value. Furthermore, he had no time to grab onto every single person who did not recognize the value of the Rebirth Sword Technique, and convince them of how amazing it was.

Sword arts was something in which it was hard for one to find

people who would share the same sentiments. It was impossible for one to request for everyone else to be capable of understanding top notch sword arts.

Therefore, he paid no heed to Leon's attitude and merely left with the caviar.

Upon returning back to the villa, Fang Xingjian then started to practice the Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash. As he waved his wooden sword about, a large spread of white, incandescent glow soared upward and turned into streams of light, filling up the entire place.

It was as if a sun had risen up from the land, with streams of sword light soaring into the skies. Fang Xingjian was surrounded by light.

Level 30 Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash... When it was activated, the impact was truly tremendous, and it startled almost all the other cultivators throughout the Sacred Land.

However, why would Fang Xingjian care about these? It did not take him very long to enter a deep state in his cultivation as he continued to push the Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash toward level 40.

The light seemed to grow increasingly stronger, and one could even see multi-colored light rays appearing around the training room. It was the slight materialisation created from the light glows when countless ether particles underwent frequency changes ceaselessly.

On the other end of the valley, there was a man with silvery hair and red lips, looking like a spirit of the mountains. The man lifted his head to look in the direction where there was a light pillar soaring high up into the air.

He said with indifference, "Radiant Light Sword Technique? No, that's not right. It's also synthesized with other stuff. It can refract

and control light... Has it been synthesized with the Supreme Mistwind Sword? There shouldn't be anyone like this in the Sacred Land. Which Elder Martial Brother has picked up a new sword technique?"

Shaking his head, he did not seem to pay much heed to that overwhelming sword light and turned to look toward the north.

"There's another year to the National Selection.

"Northern Ice Region's Rehlings...

"Southern Flame Region's Victor...

"And that person from the Imperial Capital...

"Each of them has great talent, and each of them is a rare find even from amongst ten thousand people. They're all people with strong foundations and have luck and talent that surpasses others. There are still many obstacles if I wish to become the National Champion."

After saying this, he suddenly broke out into a confident smile, "But I'll still prove it to the world that only I, Xiao Tianxia, am the strongest."

A surge of powerful and sharp aura spread out from his body ceaselessly, and the various objects around him, including the floor, walls, tables, and chairs, all started to crack and shatter.

On Fang Xingjian's end, he still continued to submerge in his training. His mastery of the Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash grew increasingly proficient, and the streams of light seemed to be instigated by his arms. Additionally, he could even control the frequency of the light beams, transforming into various colors.

After training for two hours, it was finally time for his meal.

Putting his sword aside, the white sword light gradually dissipated, as if the sun had landed on earth, and the white-colored world once again turned back to normal.

Then Fang Xingjian walked toward that box of Ice Shuttle Sturgeon's caviar. Upon opening the box, a gush of cold air welcomed him. Looking at the caviar, which were clearly distinguished and exuding a bright glow, Fang Xingjian suddenly felt that his mood had turned better. Even his fatigue from his sword arts practice had eased a little.

He carefully spread the caviar onto white bread. Usually, Fang Xingjian would not eat something like bread since the nutrients it hold were too little and it would waste his digestive system's energy to digest it.

However, he specially got himself a piece of bread to go with the caviar.

As Fang Xingjian took a bite, a refreshing and fresh taste exploded on his tastebuds. The corner of his lips curled up slightly, and he finished this caviar and bread with no effort at all.

He then took a look at the other ingredients, picked up a large butter lobster, and spread it with a layer of caviar, combining the caviar's freshness and the lobsters tenderness with some lemon juice and butter.

Fang Xingjian was no connoisseur of food, But he merely tried out the caviar together with many different ingredients.

In a short while, he finished up the food which was two times that of what he usually eats. He then looked toward the food stock in the kitchen and discovered that they were almost all gone. Fang Xingjian immediately put up a sign outside to request for the food supply to be replenished. There would be either guardian ferocious beasts or staff who would send more food over.

It was obviously impossible for the people who cultivated in the Sacred Land to have excess time to waste on cooking. Therefore, the food here were all prepared daily and then placed in the kitchen.

If there were any requirements as to the dishes and amount, they would just need to leave a message in the kitchen.

For example, Fang Xingjian had requested for a meal every two hours, with ten dishes for each meal. Each dish must have medicinal herbs and ferocious beasts.

Even if he was not in an environment with a hundred times the ether particles density, just the food provided in the Sacred Land was worth a lot of money.

After finishing the caviar, Fang Xingjian triggered his organs to digest it. He then sensed a hint of cold air spreading out on the surface of his skin, as if slowly strengthening his skin bit by bit, increasing the toughness and tenacity.

He knew that this should be the effect of the Ice Shuttle Sturgeon's caviar. However, the surface of his skin was already covered by the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor, and he did not really care how strong his skin was.

After digesting all the food, Fang Xingjian put on a serious look and then continued on with his practice. If he were to take any breaks, he would also try to write books. He would also record some of his sword arts experience and the areas one needed to pay attention to for basic sword techniques, in preparation to publish books.

Time passed and two days later, his Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash had finally reached level 40, and he was given the special effect of being able to control the frequency of light.

While Fang Xingjian was practicing unceasingly, in Hoppes' sword arts research room at the southeast area of the Regional Academy, a small matter was brewing.

Chapter 269 Seen

Since Hoppes was a sword arts master who was considered one of the pillars of the Regional Academy, his sword arts team would always be allocated a huge budget from the academy.

After all, research in sword arts was not all talk.

There were four methods of researching martial techniques. The first method was through putting into actual practice. In other words, by synthesizing techniques, one by one. It was an established fact that this method was the most time-consuming and money-draining of them all.

The second method was a fusion method—through studying and breaking down the traits of various skills and techniques, they would then be combined to create a new technique.

The third method was through inference—analyzing different techniques, studying their unique traits and data, and from there, extracting an inference of the results of the synthesization of different techniques.

The fourth and final method was through originality—similar to how people from the ancient times had gone about it, by using different principles such as that of wind, rain, thunder and lightning, feelings of vengeance in the stand of their own countries and family, or based on various legends, and then applying them to their own martial arts cultivation in order to create their own set of technique.

Although it was said that there were four methods, when put into practice, it was usually a combination of the four methods. The process was not actually clear-cut.

For example, in order to use the inferential method, one would need to first put into practice and then go through the final check. One could also achieve the same end result via the fusion method

as one who used the method of originality instead.

After all, it was impossible for the creation of a set of technique to be based on nothing. It could be inspired by various theories and phenomena in the world, or by other techniques.

To sum it up, regardless if it was for accumulating sword techniques, for the experiment materials required to study various natural phenomena, or for the students to search for and put conjectures into practice, then carefully research and analyze the traits and effects of various techniques... All of these required a tremendous sum of money.

The inferential method was not one which could appear out of nowhere in one's mind just by thinking of it. Any conjectures would require countless attempts of putting it into practice. Each test, each new sword technique to learn, each movement to change, and each changes to how one circulated the vital energy and blood, required a large number of people to experiment, and thus a great investment. The faster one wished to attain results, the higher the requirement for monetary investment.

Of course, other than money, a person's abilities and the cultivation of their martial arts would also be an advantage. For example, as a level 29 expert, the success rate of his skill synthesis was at 100%. This would save countless money and time.

That night, Hoppes was staying in a five-storey building in the southeast area of the academy, researching sword arts.

This building was known as the Sword Tower, and it was where Hoppes' sword arts team was located.

Hoppes was a level 29 expert to begin with, and thus did not need to stay in the Sacred Land for his cultivation. Moreover, he did not wish for his sword arts research to be affected by the high-density ether particles in the Sacred Land.

Hoppes let out a breath and looked at the paper that had covered

the entire table. Looking at the many inferences and the densely written information, he could not help but rub his eyes and sigh, saying, “Flying Dragon Sword Technique and Darkness Slaying Sword... I’ve already understood their traits clearly. However, the result of the simulation is not outstanding enough.

“The Flying Dragon Sword Technique’s ability to allow one’s muscles and bones to unleash an explosive prowess, and together with the Darkness Slaying Sword’s ability to expend one’s potential... Based on my estimations and experiments, the special effect it brings is only a 10% possibility of changing one’s form. I could consider further synthesizing it with other sword techniques.”

Hoppes had been trying to find a new synthesis combination for a while, a new sword technique that could increase a Knight’s ability to fight in the air.

Therefore, after hundreds of consecutive failures, fatigue started creeping up on him.

As for whether he ought to be investing money and time to synthesize the Flying Dragon Sword Technique and the Darkness Slaying Sword, completing the special effect of changing one’s form before further synthesizing it with other techniques to get the expected results... Hoppes was still hesitating.

This was how important the person-in-charge of a research team was. Based on their own experience, their martial arts mastery, and their cultivation level to determine the direction, the goals and the processes for the research study.

However, in research, failures tended to be more frequent than successes. Across history, the birth of man-made powerful techniques were all results of countless failures.

Hoppes shook his head, not wanting to continue contemplating this problem. He stood up and headed out, planning to relax.

Passing by many research rooms, Hoppes observed the progress of his subordinates.

Some people were comparing the data of different sword techniques at different levels, verifying the growth curve of the technique.

Some people were studying how slight differences to the human body would affect various sword techniques if they were people of similar talent.

They were all people working under Hoppes' instructions. After all, he wanted to get the general gist of the direction they should be moving toward, but could not always be attending to various trifling issues himself, such as collecting data and repeating experiments.

Just then, he passed by Leon. Leon was reading the manual to the Rebirth Sword Technique which Fang Xingjian had written. There was nothing but contempt and annoyance reflected in his eyes.

For the past few days, he had been reading through Fang Xingjian's manual and comparing it with the data in the library, verifying that there had not been a sword technique like this. However, he still felt that Fang Xingjian's sword technique was a jumbled up combination of various sword techniques.

But even so, it was actually considered a new sword technique. He would just register it. After all, even if others saw it, the disgrace would only be Fang Xingjian's own.

Just as Leon was thinking of this, Hoppes had already appeared behind him. Leon immediately stood up and bowed, saying, "Teacher."

Hoppes threw a glance at the manual Leon was holding, picked it up, and asked, "What is this?"

Leon said, "A newly created Nurturing sword technique." As if he was trying to clear away any affiliation to it, Leon added, "It was

written offhandedly by a new student. He forcibly threw in a huge pile of sword techniques together, but the force exertions have been smoothed out, allowing the techniques to flow together. I wanted to register it for him.

“But thinking about it, I still feel that it’s too much of a disgrace to our Great Western Region.”

He had not finished his words when he realized that Hoppes was staring at the Rebirth Sword Technique manual in a daze.

At first, when Hoppes saw the introduction to the technique, his eyes were filled with contempt. It claimed to combine the forces of countless sword techniques, whilst being able to achieve a hundred times the effects of ordinary Nurturing sword techniques... Hoppes had merely read on with the intention of looking at a joke.

However, after flipping through a few pages, his gaze turned to a reflection of suspicion and astonishment.

Ten minutes later, Hoppes was still reading the manual for the Rebirth Sword Technique, his countenance grim. He understood that this was a sword technique that was worth to be studied in great detail.

Half an hour later, Hoppes was sitting on Leon’s seat, still reading the manual for the Rebirth Sword Technique. There was no grief or happiness reflected in his eyes. Leon, who was next to him, was extremely confounded.

After another half an hour passed by, another student came by and said, “Teacher, the new data for the Slaying Sword is out. We have made new discoveries.”

“Go back and wait for me for a while,” Hoppes said casually.

This ‘a while’ took an entire one hour, and the student came by three more times, but was dismissed by Hoppes each time.

Five minutes later, Hoppes lifted his head, looked at Leon, and asked, “Who was the one who brought this sword technique?”

“Ah, it’s Fang Xingjian, this year’s Regional Champion.”

“Fang Xingjian?” Hoppes’ mind flashed and he immediately recalled the young man who had rejected his invitation.

“So it’s him.”

The next moment, Hoppes’ face relaxed, revealing a smile which he had not worn for very long.

“Where is he? Get him to come over... No, wait, I’ll go look for him.”

With that, Hoppes passed by Leon, his gaze filled with anticipation.

Chapter 270 Crowding Around

In the Sacred Land with fifty times ether particles density.

Zhou Xingwen stood there, looking toward the deeper parts of the Sacred Land. Various schemes flashed in his eyes, as if he was waiting for someone.

However, after waiting for a short while, a silhouette gradually approached where he was. It was a guy with black hair and eyes, wearing the Knight attire and exuding a strong sense of inhibition and elegance.

He was the person ranked ninth in the academy, the level 26 Conferred Knight, Wang Tiangang.

Right now, Wang Tiangang was filled with confidence and appeared extremely capable.

As one of the top ten in the Regional Academy at the age of thirty-five, he was considered a young talent with a bright future. Since he would have at least twenty to thirty years to try to work for Divine level, his expression was that of confidence.

Looking at Zhou Xingwen, he spoke calmly, "It's been half a month. Haven't you settled it yet?"

Zhou Xingwen smiled bitterly and said, "Brother Tiangang, that Fang Xingjian is really too tight-lipped. It's really hard to negotiate the price with him. Moreover, he has only come out twice after so many days and is a cultivation freak. It's not easy to even get a chance to speak with him."

Wang Tiangang frowned. As the person ranked ninth in the academy, he was definitely a person of great confidence, but how could he not wish to challenge the eight people before him?

However, before he could challenge people, he would first need to have enough power. Especially now that there was only one more year until next year's National Selection, everyone was

furiously bringing out their fullest potential, hoping to stand out amongst the competition. What Wang Tiangang needed was to have more cards in his hands.

For example, a cultivation area with one hundred times ether particles density. With such an advantage, he believed that he would be able to enter the top five and might even be able to shake the three monsters at the very top.

However, Fang Xingjian was now asking for the price of one million gold. To Wang Tiangang, this was an outrageous amount and it was impossible for him to obtain and pay such a huge sum of money.

As for the other fifteen people in the Sacred Land with a hundred times density, all of them were of great seniority and came from influential backgrounds. Other than those ranked in the top eight of the academy, the remaining seven people were the great masters of the academy, and none of them were people Wang Tiangang could replace.

He could only try his luck with a new student like Fang Xingjian, but he could not use force either.

Hearing Zhou Xingwen's words, Wang Tiangang frowned and said, "After he came out, what did he do?"

Zhou Xingwen replied, "The first time was to look for a few of his friends. As for the second time, it was to register his sword technique."

Wang Tiangang was astonished, "Register sword technique? He has created a Killing technique?" No matter the method used, creating one's own sword technique was not an easy feat. It required a high level of mastery of sword arts, and although Wang Tiangang had thought of creating his own sword technique before, he had not succeeded.

However, Zhou Xingwen shook his head and said, "It's a

Nurturing sword technique.”

Wang Tiangang nodded. So it was a set of Nurturing sword technique. He could easily create a few sets of Nurturing sword techniques at any time. After all, they were martial techniques that train and nurture the physical body, and it was a simple feat for a Conferred Knight like him to be able to come out with several methods to train the body.

“Nurturing sword technique? Then it’s nothing much.” Wang Tiangang said. “If it’s really impossible, I’ll find a way to lure him out in a few days time. Wait...you said that he had gone to register the Nurturing sword technique he created? He likes fame?”

“Maybe.” Zhou Xingwen had also thought about this before. “However, I’ve seen the sword technique he created. It’s just piecing in jumbled parts from everywhere and was not anything much. It’s quite hard to gain fame from it.”

“Anyway, it’s already been too long. I’ve submitted a request to the teachers to get permission to visit Fang Xingjian. I can stay in the area with one hundred times density for half an hour. Come along with me.

“This time, we must get this settled.”

Just as the two of them were exchanging conversation, two other people came over at a rapid speed along the path like a strong gale. An elderly was grabbing onto an equally wild looking man who was like a lion, appearing before Zhou Xingwen and Wang Tiangang.

They were the slovenly dressed Hoppes and Leon whom he had dragged over with him.

Hoppes came to an abrupt stop when he saw Wang Tiangang. As he did so, the strong gale, falling leaves, and dust and sand which were flying everywhere came to a stop. The scene had a mysterious feeling to it.

When Wang Tiangang saw Hoppes, he immediately bowed and said, “Master Hoppes, why have you come to the Sacred Land?” His impression of Master Hoppes was a person who was obsessed with sword arts and would tend to not cultivate in the Sacred Land. He would instead spend his time in the research rooms outside, endlessly researching newer and more powerful sword arts.

It was only when he heard Wang Tiangang’s words, that Hoppes took a long look at him and said, “Oh, Wang Tiangang?” He then immediately asked, “Did you see Fang Xingjian coming out?”

“Fang Xingjian?” Wang Tiangang frowned and said, “I didn’t see him. You have something to talk to him about?” Suddenly, a bad feeling rose in his heart.

“Didn’t he create a set of sword technique?” Hoppes said, “I’ve a lot of questions to ask him about this sword technique. It’s good that you haven’t seen him, it’s good that you haven’t seen him.”

There was only one path which served both as the entrance and exit to the Sacred Land. Since Wang Tiangang did not meet Fang Xingjian, it meant that the latter was still inside.

With that, Hoppes took another step, creating a storm again. The strong gale, fallen leaves, as well as the sand and dust once again followed behind him, leaving behind the baffled Wang Tiangang.

Wang Tiangang frowned and said, “Master Hoppes is looking for Fang Xingjian?”

Zhou Xingwen then looked toward the direction leading to the deeper areas of the Sacred Land, saying, “Let’s follow them.”

As a master in the academy, Hoppes had great authority, and thus did not come across any obstacles even though he had Leon with him. In the blink of an eye, they had already appeared before Fang Xingjian’s cultivation house.

At that moment, Fang Xingjian had just completed his practice

for the Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash, reaching level 40 and gaining the ability to change the frequency of sword light, unleashing lights of various colors, or even making them invisible to the eye.

And although he did not put much focus into practicing the Nine-Headed Dragon Sword Technique, he had used this Training technique to temper his potential daily after he had completed his job transition. After a few days, he had also reached level 40 for this sword technique, once again increasing the efficiency at which he was tempering his attributes, reducing the practice time required.

Fang Xingjian was holding on to a pen and paper, writing out the last page to the outline of his book. He was planning to send it out tomorrow and get Ferdinand to find someone to continue work on it before publishing and selling it for a profit.

However, just then, a voice rang out. “Is Fang Xingjian around? I’m Hoppes. I’d like to discuss something about the registration of your newly created sword technique.”

Hearing the name Hoppes, the image of the sloven old man who seemed to have no care for worldly possessions and focused only on sword arts once again appeared in his mind.

He opened the door and saw Hoppes standing there, holding onto Leon. When Hoppes saw Fang Xingjian coming out, he immediately grab Fang Xingjian on the shoulder and asked, “The Rebirth Sword Technique... This sword technique is something you created?”

“That’s right.” Fang Xingjian lifted his head and saw that Wang Tiangang and Zhou Xingwen were also heading over from the distance. The impact of the Sacred Land for Conferred Knights was really not that great and they were able to easily follow behind Hoppes.

Hoppes then stared at Fang Xingjian and asked, “How’s the effect

of this set of sword technique? How much potential can one get at level 10?”

Chapter 271 Conversation

At this moment, looking at his teacher's look of anticipation, Leon knew his judgement was wrong. Not only was Fang Xingjian's Rebirth Sword Technique not a rubbish technique, but on the contrary, it could be an outstanding Nurturing sword technique.

Usually, the checking and registration of the new sword techniques in Great Western Region Regional Academy was done by Leon. He would only recommend a new sword technique to his teacher, Hoppes, when he came across a more outstanding one.

After passing through their requirements, this was when the technique would then be submitted to the Knight Association in the Imperial capital. Once it was approved by the Knight Association, the new sword technique would then be entered into the sword arts archive and added into the Knight's handbook which the association gives out. The handbook would be distributed to every Royal Academy and various departments in the Empire for them to browse through before deciding if they wished to purchase the rights to it.

Of course, these people who browsed through the handbook would be able to pick up new sword techniques during the process, and they would not be charged since there was no need for that.

If there was a charge implemented even for the channels between top notch experts and researchers, it would not generate profits and would also delay the rate of development of martial techniques.

However, majority of them were too busy and would not have much time to acquire new techniques, unless the new techniques were especially outstanding or if they were very suitable for them.

Upon hearing his teacher's question, Leon turned to look at Fang Xingjian with curiosity. He was also very puzzled on how this

sword technique, which seemed liked hodgepodge, could be amazing.

Behind Hoppes, Wang Tiangang walked over as well. Hearing Hoppes' question, both Wang Tiangang and Zhou Xingwen immediately understood that Hoppes had taken a fancy to the sword technique Fang Xingjian had created.

The two of them then exchanged a glance as they started to wonder what amazing aspects the Rebirth Sword Technique had that it could make a master rush over in a panic.

Fang Xingjian did not plan to hide much of the information. Since he wanted to sell this sword technique, he would naturally want more people to know just how amazing the Rebirth Sword Technique was. The more people knew about it, the better.

After picking up this technique, they would gradually realize just how powerful it was.

Therefore, Fang Xingjian chose his words carefully before saying, "I have some specialties which increase my potential, so I can't say for sure how much potential ordinary people would gain if they were to practice the Rebirth Sword Technique. But there should be at least 4,000-5,000 points."

"5,000 points?" Leon's eyes almost popped out. He criticized unconsciously, "Do you know that currently, the best Nurturing sword technique can only provide 800 potential points daily at level 10? You claim that yours can give 5,000 points... What a joke."

He turned to his teacher and said, "Teacher, there's no way..." However, he saw that Hoppes did not seem to be surprised or infuriated. Hoppes merely stroke his chin and asked, "5,000 points?"

Leon felt this was simply unbelievable. Could it be that Teacher really believed there was a Nurturing sword technique which could

provide 5,000 potential points daily? When ordinary people practiced general level 10 sword techniques, they would only be able to gain tens or hundreds of potential points. It was already considered amazing if a sword technique could provide 800 potential points, and this was a miracle created by the Southern Flame Region Regional Academy's sword arts team.

Leon was still filled with disbelief, '5,000 points? How is that possible?'

However, Hoppes was looking at Fang Xingjian with great interest, and his eyes blinked like stars glimmering in the sky.

Hoppes had not said if he believed the Nurturing sword technique could provide 5,000 points. He then merely said,

"This set of Rebirth Sword Technique is truly very interesting. I've seen the traces of many different sword arts in it. In the beginning, I thought you had just randomly thrown some things together, but eventually, I realized that it was not the case.

"Every move and stance, every action to channel force, has been combined together perfectly. Even if the technique was just thrown together randomly, it has been done perfectly. It's just like using a fusion method of extracting the essence of many sword techniques and recreating them into a brand new sword technique.

"If this Rebirth Sword Technique was created through skills synthesis, it'll probably require quite a number of sword techniques, right?"

Fang Xingjian had long prepared the answer to this, so he replied, "That's right. I've fused a total of thirty sets of Nurturing sword techniques for this Rebirth Sword Technique."

Although he had reduced the actual number by a lot, it still astonished everyone present.

Leon said with disbelief, "Thirty sets of Nurturing sword techniques? You've reached the maximum level in all of them?"

Fang Xingjian nodded. Leon, Wang Tiangang, and the others fell silent again.

What kind of concept was this to require thirty sets of Nurturing sword techniques brought to their maximum level? It was something which ordinary people would never be able to do in their whole life. Even for people with the talent like Leon and Wang Tiangang, they would probably still need to devote all their time and effort into practicing these thirty sets of sword techniques for a period of twenty years before they would be able to reach the maximum level for all of them.

This was truly too unbelievable. Although Fang Xingjian did not seem to be lying, they still found it hard to believe.

Just then, Hoppes smiled and said, “Amazing. As expected of the genius who has comprehended all seven levels of the mysteries to the Pantheon Monument. You’re only seventeen this year, right? To think that you’ve already mastered thirty sets of Nurturing sword techniques and created the Rebirth Sword Technique. I’ve also done a prediction after reading your manual in detail and felt it should be able to increase one’s potential points by a lot. But I would never have thought that it could bring as many as 5,000 points.

“Mm... We’ll still need to verify this. 5,000 points... it’s too scary a number.”

When the others heard Hoppes’ words, they also understood the meaning behind his words.

That’s right. For a genius who had resolved all seven levels of the mysteries to the Pantheon Monument... it was not unexpected for him to have this result.

Especially for Leon, when he thought of how he had only provided Hoppes with the information about Fang Xingjian on the way earlier, he realized that he had unconsciously neglected this point.

Well, thirty sets of Nurturing sword techniques at the maximum level was too spectacular.

However, compared to being able to comprehend the seven levels of the mysteries to the Pantheon Monument, it did not seem that astonishing anymore.

Hoppes immediately grabbed Fang Xingjian and asked, “There are traces of the sword techniques from the School of Sword Arts. I’d like to ask, how did you fuse the Grizzly Bear Sword Technique and the Eagle Sword Technique? Their concepts are slightly different, right?”

Fang Xingjian replied, “I just perform them together?”

“Perform them together?” Hoppes was confounded, and he asked, “Then what about the Mountain Sword Technique and the Universal Sword Dominance?”

“It’s the same, perform them together.” Fang Xingjian had no plans to discuss too much of the theory with him and said directly, “Just perform them concurrently in the body.”

Hoppes was stunned, but he immediately thought to himself, ‘Is this how geniuses do things?’ Thinking of how he had been called a genius since young... To think that he had come across someone who was even more monstrous than him.

Hoppes and Fang Xingjian were still having an exchange when Wang Tiangang walked up to Leon and asked, “Can I have a look at it?”

Leon threw a glance at Wang Tiangang. Facing this Conferred Knight whose rank far surpassed his own... if it was an ordinary situation, he would definitely greet him properly. However, today, he did not do so. Leon was still immersed in the astonishment Fang Xingjian had brought him.

Wang Tiangang took Fang Xingjian’s manual and glanced through it quickly.

Truth be told, Wang Tiangang was not one who would follow Hoppes blindly, with great trust in his judgement. Therefore, when he looked at the Rebirth Sword Technique, he had wanted to do so critically.

From the start, as Wang Tiangang glanced through it, he had wanted to point out its flaws. However, after reading through it once... he then started to read it again in detail right from the start.

Wang Tiangang's countenance turned increasingly grim.

Leon's expression was still filled with doubt. '5,000 potential points? Forget about 5,000 points. If it can give 3,000 points, it'll probably be able to change the state of the entire world...

'Is this really possible?'

Chapter 272 Surprise

“This...” The more he read the Rebirth Sword Technique’s manual, the more astonished Wang Tiangang was. Not only did his rank greatly surpass Leon’s, his mastery of sword arts was greater as well.

This was why, like Hoppes, he could tell how outstanding the Rebirth Sword Technique was.

How was this a hodgepodge sword technique? This was clearly a Nurturing sword technique that had combined the essences of countless sword techniques. Although each move and stance seemed to be randomly pieced together, they all contained the marvel of several sword moves and were aimed toward nurturing the body through an extreme method. Any more would damage the body and any less would make it just an ordinary Nurturing sword technique.

This was also why he could clearly understand how difficult it was to create this sword technique.

Wang Tiangang lifted his head to look at Fang Xingjian once again, and especially after looking at the latter’s young appearance at seventeen, he thought of how he himself was already thirty-five. He could not suppress the burning jealousy that was growing in his heart.

‘Why was I not the one who created this sword technique?’

Everyday, after practicing all his Nurturing techniques, he would only gain a little over 4,000 potential points. However, Fang Xingjian’s single Rebirth Sword Technique could already provide him with 5,000 points, no, not just 5,000 points, since Fang Xingjian still had the enhancement from his specialties. Moreover, the highest level of his sword technique would definitely not be at level 10.

Thinking of this, Wang Tiangang felt even more depressed.

Thank goodness he was not aware of the number of potential points Fang Xingjian was getting everyday. If he were to know of it, he would probably have the urge to kill Fang Xingjian with his sword.

This was also the reason why Fang Xingjian did not reveal the entire truth. After all, having a lead would only cause others to be jealous, and having a lead of a hundred steps could drive others into desperation and drive them crazy.

Zhou Xingwen walked up and asked, "What's the matter?"

Wang Tiangang let out a long breath, shook his head, and left without saying a word.

Since young, he had always relied on his superior talent to crush other Knights, enjoying the ecstasy of crushing the weak.

However, this time around, he had finally experienced what his companions had always been feeling... The feeling of complete loss to someone with greater talent.

It did not feel good.

Now, he suddenly felt thankful to the many seniors he had surpassed since young. To think that they had not tried to kill him.

Even though Wang Tiangang had left, Zhou Xingwen stayed behind. As he looked at Fang Xingjian, no one could tell what he was thinking.

Hoppes was still engaged in a discussion with Fang Xingjian, from the circulation of the force, to the trembling of the organs, to the circulation of the vital energy and blood.... Leon was now completely left out of the loop and was unable to understand what they were saying.

At the start, he could still understand certain parts of it and kept up, albeit barely. But now, as he listened to Hoppes' and Fang

Xingjian's discussion, he had the feeling of being completely ignorant.

Although he could understand each individual word by itself, he did not understand a single thing when the words were all pieced together.

If he had been to Earth before, he would know that there was a saying that could describe his current situation.

Even though I do not know what you mean, it sounds amazing.

This feeling gave him a stronger feeling of admiration than if he were to understand the conversation. As he waited by the side and looked on as Fang Xingjian and Hoppes continued their conversation for over an hour, Hoppes finally smiled and said, "It's really unexpected how your understanding of Nurturing sword techniques, vital energy and blood is already so deep. How about it, are you interested in joining my sword arts team?"

Hoppes extended the invitation once again. What could Leon say to this? He merely looked at Fang Xingjian with great admiration. He had already discarded the disdain and the contempt he had for Fang Xingjian earlier.

Faced with the invitation for the second time, Fang Xingjian still had no plans of joining them. He had his own arrangements and did not plan to become Hoppes' subordinate.

Seeing Fang Xingjian shaking his head and rejecting him, Hoppes did not feel awkward in the least. He merely smiled and said, "Xingjian, you might not understand yet. Pursuing sword arts, pursuing the pinnacle in martial arts... these require a tremendous amount of time and money.

"And my sword arts team can get a budget of at least a 300,000 gold from the Regional Academy every year. I can let you have 50,000 gold to study sword arts further.

"Of course, the direction of the study must be approved by me."

Hoppes really admired Fang Xingjian's talent and could not help but want to help him along.

And to think that a sword arts research team in the Regional Academy could be given a budget of 300,000 gold per year, over two times more than how much KIRST Royal Academy was given. From just this point alone, one could tell the great gap between Prefectural Academies and Regional Academies. It was like the difference between high schools and universities.

When Leon heard this, he looked toward Fang Xingjian with a yearning look on his face.

Getting 50,000 gold every year... This was considered a huge sum of money to him. Or rather, to any Conferred Knight who was below level 25, it would be considered a huge sum of money.

However, Fang Xingjian still shook his head and said, "No need. For now, I don't wish to join any research teams."

Hoppes shook his head in pity. He did not push him further but merely said, "I'll report your Rebirth Sword Technique to the Knight Association. If we hurry up a bit, we should be able to see it in the Knight's handbook at the end of this month. Right, how much are you planning to put it up for? For the royalties that is."

Saying that, Hoppes smiled. "I see a bright future for this sword technique. Putting aside the major academies, probably even quite a number of departments in the military and local forces would want to purchase the rights to it."

The exact price the royalties would be set at was something that required multiple negotiations. Fang Xingjian planned to let Ferdinand handle this. However, the Knight's handbook allowed the creator to include a reference fee as an estimation for those who were interested in purchasing the rights.

Fang Xingjian gave it some thought and said, "What do you think about setting it as 3,000 gold per year?"

When he heard that Fang Xingjian was considering setting it at 3,000 gold per year, Leon could not help but gasp. This was beyond expensive. The royalties for ordinary Killing techniques would only cost a few hundred gold. How much was 3,000 gold? If twenty academies were to purchase the rights, then Fang Xingjian's annual income would be 60,000 gold, a much higher price than what Hoppes had offered him.

Of course, the prerequisite was that there were people who were willing to pay so much money for it.

Hoppes stroked his beard which he had not shaven for quite a while, saying, "Haha, it's a little expensive, but you can discuss the price with them when the time comes. However, if you wish to gain recognition earlier, it'll be better for your to lower the price a little. Otherwise, even if you get recognized for the theory, with no concrete results, many people would still not be willing to purchase it easily."

Fang Xingjian understood this. Even if the Knight Association's review team had verified the effects of the Rebirth Sword Technique theoretically, only after many people started learning it and showed results would the Rebirth Sword Technique then spread like wildfire.

After sending off Hoppes and the envious Leon, Fang Xingjian returned into the house. There was no need for him to adjust his mental state and he could just continue to finish up the last few lines of the book he was working on. He then started training the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash.

He seemed as if he had not been affected by Hoppes and the income he would be getting in the future.

Remaining indifferent regardless of being showered with praises or humiliation, neither conceited nor rash. Every since he became a Conferred Knight, his Universal Sword Dominance Lunisolar mental cultivation method continued to circulate, causing him to

be increasingly calm.

It was as if he had accumulated his various negative emotions, including fury and vengeance, and, when he came across external demons or felt unjust, these emotions would explode out in an instant like a sharp sword drawn from its sheath.

And now, after the past few days of training and sorting out, his techniques had become:

Boundaries Negation Level 40

Rebirth Sword Technique Level 40

New Nine-Headed Dragon Sword Technique Level 40

Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash Level 40

Ether Sword Ripples Level 4

Ether Divine Art Level 4

Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash Level 1

Other than his Ether Divine Art and Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash, the rest had already reached the maximum level. The next thing to do was to push the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash to the maximum level before proceeding with skills synthesis.

Chapter 273 Getting Ready for Publication

From there, the Rebirth Sword Technique was submitted to the Knight Association, and supposedly, it would feature in the Knight's handbook that was due to be handed out at the end of the month. The Headmasters of the respective academies and big shots of the various departments would then slowly get to know about how powerful the Rebirth Sword Technique was, and then start to purchase the rights to this sword technique. The entire process would probably still take very long.

Therefore, while the Rebirth Sword Technique could bring about great returns, it would probably be of no help to Fang Xingjian in the short run.

Now, Fang Xingjian still had to earnestly practice the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash, and publish books to earn money while the hype related to his Regional Champion title was still there.

Therefore, after Fang Xingjian had spent one night bringing the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash to level 9, the next morning, he once again headed to the inn where Ferdinand was at.

However, when he arrived at the inn, he was informed that Ferdinand and the others were no longer staying there. Following the address that Ferdinand had left behind, Fang Xingjian came to a small two-storey manor in the southern corner of the Great Western City. The manor had a small garden of about twenty square meter. The building was a European-styled house which seemed to have only been built a couple of years before.

Ferdinand opened the door to welcome Fang Xingjian and said, "This place isn't that bad, right? I was thinking that we can't keep staying at the inn, and since I've won a large sum of money from you winning the title of Regional Champion, I might as well put the money to use and buy this house.

“This house originally belonged to a Knight from Great Western City. He was transferring to Southern Flame Region, and since he was in a rush to sell it off, I got it for only 800 gold.”

As he spoke, he was leading Fang Xingjian to the hall, where they found a furry carpet and a real leather couch that made one feel as if they would sink in when they sat on it. There would be maids serving drinks and snacks at all times, and each corner of the room had a block of ice half a meter tall, that emanated a chilling air. There was no hint of the summer heat in the room at all.

Fang Xingjian sighed, “You really know how to enjoy yourself.”

Ferdinand smiled, “Since I have the money, I can’t possibly treat myself badly. How’s your progress?”

Robert and Anthony also walked in, looking at Fang Xingjian in anticipation.

Fang Xingjian took out the outline he wrote on the process of his cultivation. There was another set, which consisted of the main points and insights he had when he was cultivating the basic sword techniques.

Ferdinand took the books and flipped through them. Fang Xingjian asked, “Oh, right. If we were to sell books, do we need to get approval from the government? How are you guys planning on printing them?”

These two were the questions he had been puzzled about, but had not managed to find an answer to.

Ferdinand looked at the documents, nodding occasionally, while he answered Fang Xingjian, “Approval? We’re just selling books, what approval do we need? At most, we’ll just need to pay some taxes to the municipal government. Alternatively, we can pay them some bribes, or just sell them illegally. We won’t even have to pay any taxes then.

“As for the printing, we can use mechanical printing. Haha, we

have the Second Prince to thank. If not for him gathering a bunch of people together to invent paper and printing, it'd be troublesome.”

Only after Fang Xingjian asked for more details did he learn that paper and printing had also existed in Miracle World in the past. However, it was basic woodblock printing or rough papyrus. The Second Prince had taken the lead to start a revolution for making mechanical printing and white paper of better quality possible. It had sped up the dissemination of documents and culture within the Empire.

‘Is the Second Prince thinking of using the modern technology on Earth to slowly change the entire country? However, against the First Prince’s absolute violence, this method would take effect far too slowly...’

Fang Xingjian contemplated about the Second Prince while Ferdinand continued, “The story is too simple. I’ll get someone to make some changes to it. As for the insights, I’ll leave them be. I have faith in your sword arts level.”

“Changing the story?”

Ferdinand grinned, “Just twisting it a little. It’s best to say stuff like ‘despite being looked down on by superiors, teachers, and foreigners, the student independently proved himself to be outstanding,’ or stuff like that. People like to read things like these.”

Fang Xingjian frowned. Although he did not like having his story falsified, earning money was more important. Therefore, he could only say, “Don’t go overboard with it.”

“Don’t worry, I’ll definitely make you sound great.” Ferdinand then smiled again, “A Knight who was down in the dumps becoming a great genius, soaring and amazing everyone else! After gaining fame and reputation, he was neither conceited nor rash, falling in love at first sight with a lady who was a commoner.

Hehe, the maids from my previous manor all liked to read such novels.”

Fang Xingjian said with indifference, “I’ve also registered a new Nurturing sword technique. When the time comes, I’ll need you to help work things out. If anyone comes to purchase the rights, I’ll get them to look for you here.”

Ferdinand nodded, his eyes still fixed on the book Fang Xingjian had written, not paying much heed to the new sword technique. It was really not easy to sell Nurturing sword techniques, let alone to sell them for a good price.

Most of the time, they were created by people with great authority, great masters, or who owned an entire academy after much effort and after having invested a tremendous amount of time and money.

After all, creating things like Nurturing sword techniques as a basic research study was something that countless generations of people had gone through great efforts to accomplish. Even the slightest improvement required a much too great price to be paid.

However, Ferdinand had another idea. He lifted his head and asked Fang Xingjian, “Xingjian, currently, your talent is great, and the speed at which you learn at is very fast, right?”

He was asking the obvious. A person who was able to comprehend all seven mysteries of the Pantheon Monument would undoubtedly have great talent and amazing learning abilities.

Fang Xingjian ‘looked’ at him and nodded.

Ferdinand then asked again, “Then what’s the level 29 armor that the academy has rewarded you with? Is it an entire set of armor? Are its defensive abilities very strong? When do you think you’ll be able to complete your second transition?”

Hearing his series of questions, Fang Xingjian said, “Get to the point.”

“Hehe, I’m hoping to stir up your reputation a bit before starting to sell the books. I’ve heard that in your Regional Academy, ordinary Killing techniques are in the library, while the compulsory Killing techniques of each department are in the Killing Techniques Palace.”

“Killing Techniques Palace?” Fang Xingjian frowned. He had yet to learn about this, but he was now hearing it from Ferdinand, an outsider to the academy.

The Regional Academy had various courses, one of which was the Killing technique class. The requirement was for each student to pick up the compulsory Killing techniques of their respective departments.

These Killing techniques were all in the Killing Techniques Palace. The Sword Arts Department that Fang Xingjian was in had four sets of Killing technique in the Killing Techniques Palace. Each student needed to gradually progress in the respective Killing technique before moving onto the next one.

Ferdinand continued, “I don’t know the details of the learning process in the Killing Techniques Palace, but I’m thinking that with your talent, you’d probably be able to set a new record in the Regional Academy. When that happens, it’ll be easier for us to sell the books.”

He smiled and said, “Solving the mysteries to the Pantheon Monument, then setting a record in the Killing Techniques Palace. An unrivalled talent breaking consecutive records, astonishing the higher echelon of the Empire and climbing to the peak in the Regional Academy. What are the secrets behind his success? It’ll all be in the book. Hehe, how attractive is this headline? How many people would buy the book?”

Anthony grabbed his chin and said, “Is it too offending?” If this was really written in the books, it would probably offend a whole load of students in the academy.

Ferdinand laughed coldly, “Offending? The Prefectural Selection chooses ten out of hundreds and thousands of people, the Regional Selection chooses ten out of a few hundred people, and the National Selection chooses another ten out of eighty people. Each of the champions fight their way to the top.

“There’re limited resources in this world. One must fight to get what they want. Only those who are weak and have mediocre talent are afraid of offending people. It’s because they can’t win in a fight.

“As for those who succeed... Which genius would be afraid of offending people? To get first place, to get even more resources, one naturally needs to snatch from others. When you get more resources, others naturally get less. If you’re afraid of offending people, then you can just resign to being a person without any accomplishments for all your life.”

With that, he looked at Xingjian and said, “Isn’t that right, Xingjian?”

Chapter 274 Attending Class

Fang Xingjian nodded and said, "Do as you wish. Just don't go overboard." With that, he stood up and headed for the door. He said what he had needed to say and returned to the Sacred Land for his training.

In fact, if it wasn't to raise the speed of his cultivation or because it required a tremendous sum of money to prepare for the cultivation of mystical prints, Fang Xingjian could just stay in the Sacred Land and only leave when his Killing techniques reached the maximum level.

Ferdinand and the others had long gotten used to Fang Xingjian's fanatical training and thus did not try to keep him back. Fang Xingjian returned to the Sacred Land and continued the boring cycle of eating, training, eat, and training.

It was simple, boring, and lonely. He practiced the steps to the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash continuously and repeated them ceaselessly. Even if Fang Xingjian had the world's best talent, if he wanted to succeed, he would still need to devote a tremendous amount of hard work into his cultivation.

During the process of working hard, he would need to put up with boredom and loneliness. It could be said that training was never a pleasant thing to do. One would only be able to get a sense of satisfaction when one achieved success, such as having the technique leveling up, only after going through endless toil.

The whole process was a cycle of agony, satisfaction, and then agony again.

As his cultivation continued to progress, Fang Xingjian realized that his ether synchronization rate had now increased to 13% as well. This was much faster than he had expected. The additional 3% increase made the information he received even more multifarious and disorderly, and in huge amounts. It also allowed

him to see more within the ten meter radius of his Heaven's Perception.

Fang Xingjian's fingers stroked the air, as if he could sense the restlessness within it. He could also sense various hints of fury, desperation, and loneliness.

'Are these the emotions left behind by people who had cultivated in the past?'

Fang Xingjian looked at his own palm as if he could sense countless things encompassing him, yet he could not see clearly what they were. He could only guess indistinctly that they should be air, radiation, waves, and even ether particles.

His cultivation speed was not bad.

His ether synchronization rate had increased by 3% within half a month, so he should be able to increase it by 10% within one to two months.

This was something that ordinary Conferred Knights would only be able to achieve within one or even two years.

These were the increased effects from the Sacred Land with one hundred times the density, his specialty, Darkness Sword Sense, as well as the best sword talent he had. This allowed his efficiency to be several hundred times greater than that of ordinary people.

Of course, Fang Xingjian was blind, and thus, he had to rely on Heaven's Perception to observe everything. This might also be one possible reason.

However, although several hundred times sounded like a lot, there were also people who had toiled their lives away for fifty years but had never been able to cross the Knight stage. Thus, they were forever stuck at level 9.

Some people, however, were able to reach the legendary Divine level after fifty years. The efficiency for these people could also be described as several hundred times.

Moreover, increasing his ether synchronization rate by 10% in one to two months was still considered to slow Fang Xingjian. He wanted to participate in the National Selection one year later or even be able to go up against the First Prince.

He still needed to earn money in order to cultivate mystical prints and, in turn, increase his ether synchronization rate.

However, this was not something Fang Xingjian could rush. He practiced the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash for another day, pushing it up to level 23.

When the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash was at level 10, nine shadows could be created with one sword attack. Each move could create nine Godly Demon Clones, and a maximum of ninety-nine clones could be created.

At level 20, the special effect further evolved to create nineteen shadows with one sword, creating a maximum of 299 clones.

There would be over a hundred lifelike Godly Demon Clones which could switch positions with Fang Xingjian. The Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash was truly a technique which combined both attack and defences together, and could be said to be the best move for a scuffle or probing. Fang Xingjian was full of anticipation for the effect which would result from synthesizing with the Luminous Heaven Soaring Slash.

Early the next morning, Fang Xingjian decided to head out and check out the courses in the Regional Academy. He wanted to have a breather, gain new experiences, and check out how the Killing Techniques Palace was like.

Based on his estimation, the Killing Techniques Palace of the Sword Arts Department probably had some Killing techniques unique to sword arts.

Leaving the Sacred Land, he randomly asked someone for directions to the Academic Building before heading over.

Supported by countless huge rock pillars, it was a great hall which looked like the Pantheon in Rome.

However, not all courses were conducted in the Academic Building. When Fang Xingjian arrived at the Academic Building, he discovered that at the entrance, aside from the rankings, there was a course schedule with the timings and locations for all the courses which would be conducted that week.

In the main hall of the Academic Building itself, there was a course being conducted.

A female Conferred Knight was standing in the middle of the hall, surrounded by six Conferred Knights who were either seated, standing, or even lying down. They seemed to be going through an ordinary discussion.

The female Conferred Knight in the middle had beautiful long hair, and she wore a Knight attire and Scarlet Cape. Her skin was tender, and her expression leisurely. She also had an elegant and graceful disposition. The female Conferred Knight stood there and said, “The most important aspect in a Knight’s training is to continuously raise your ether synchronization rate. As the ether synchronization rate rises, you would be able to gain more information and exchange more power.

“Regardless of whether it’s your observation skills, talent, or understanding of the natural world, they would just get increasingly deeper, and the prowess of your Killing techniques would get increasingly powerful as well.

“However, this is a gradual process. You need to train up your willpower slowly and carefully approach those external information.

“It’s because the human body has its limits. If you were to receive a tremendous amount of information too early, you’ll end up being harmed as your consciousness will not be able to accept them. You may go crazy, suffer from memory loss, or even become like a

zombie.

“When a Conferred Knight’s ether synchronization rate reaches 20%, you would be able to sense other people’s emotions. At 30%, you would be able to see light and sound. At this stage, you would be able to channel in your own information into material objects and other living things.

“This would also become a method for you to attack other people, through channeling in your own memories and will into other people, brainwashing them, or even let them become your puppet temporarily. This is also known as willpower impact.

“A Knight’s attacks surpasses that of ordinary people. Just the Reduced Force Field alone would make them unrivalled.

“And for us, Conferred Knights, we can use Heaven’s Perception to unleash willpower impacts.

“What I’m going to be teaching today is how to fend off such attacks.”

As the female Knight spoke, another lady walked up right to Fang Xingjian. She was Rota, who was also from Kirst Academy. Rota looked curiously at the Regional Champion from her batch and said softly, “Why haven’t I seen you around?”

Although Rota was wearing ordinary training wear at the moment, she still could not hide her long and slender figure, and appeared like a beautiful female snake. Other than the female lecturer, the other male counterparts were looking at her the most.

“I was training,” Fang Xingjian said casually.

Rota blinked and asked, “I heard you’ve gained access to the Sacred Land with one hundred times the density? What does that feel like?”

In another corner, a guy who appeared short and fat like a big slab of marble, threw a dissatisfied glance at Fang Xingjian. He felt especially disgruntled when he saw how close Rota was with Fang

Xingjian.

His name was Titan, and he was a level 22 Conferred Knight ranked in 40th position. When he first saw Rota, he had been astonished. Then after he knew of her performance in the Regional Selection... that she had been one of the examinees selected by the Melancholic Monarch and thus was almost able to attain the Heaven's Perception, his attitude toward Rota had been even more passionate.

However, no matter how much ardor Titan had approached her with, Rota had not shown him much interest. Now, seeing how close Rota was with Fang Xingjian, a flame of fury ignited in his heart.

Especially after seeing Fang Xingjian's slender body and elegant disposition, Titan grew increasingly irritated.

Finally, after the female teacher had spoken her piece, Titan shouted suddenly, "Teacher Angelina, it's useless to just talk. Why don't we have a demonstration? I'm sure there are some newcomers who have yet to experience willpower impacts."

Chapter 275 Demonstration

When the beautiful female teacher, who went by the name of Angelina, heard Titan's words, she gave it some thought and nodded. "What you said makes sense. There are a couple of new faces today. You two must be from this year's Regional Selection?"

As Angelina spoke, everyone turned to look at Fang Xingjian and Rota.

Angelina smiled and said, "It's true that no matter how much is said, it'll be better to have an exchange with an expert. This is especially so for the willpower impact which is a spiritual exchange. If you don't experience it for yourself, you'll never be able to fully understand it.

"If you were to enter the Sacred Land in the future, you would also need to get used to the information flow in the form of willpower impact."

Then she suddenly clapped and said, "That's right. The two of you haven't completed the second transition, right? That's perfect. Let the Conferred Knights channel information into you. It'll even increase your success rate in attaining Heaven's Perception."

Although the teacher named Angelina appeared somewhat refined, she was in fact a little dim.

She was a noblewoman who had been called a genius since young as well as carefully cared for, and had never experienced any fights or schemes. Additionally, after Angelina had entered the Regional Academy and eventually become a teacher, she had devoted most of her time to studying and researching. She could be said to be a typical nerd.

It was true that Rota had not completed the second transition nor had she completely attained Heaven's Perception. As for Fang Xingjian, he had yet to tell anyone that he had already completed

the second transition.

However, Rota naturally hoped to be able to give it a try. On the other hand, Fang Xingjian also wanted to know what willpower impact from a Conferred Knight was like. He wanted to know if it was similar to the experience he had when he had tried to fend off Domirov.

Seeing that both of them had agreed, Titan immediately stood up and walked up to Fang Xingjian. He patted Fang Xingjian on the shoulder and spoke as if he had been through something similar before, “Haha, junior, you haven’t experienced willpower impact yet, right? Let me give you some guidance. Don’t worry, I’m already at level 22 with an ether synchronization rate of 32%. I’ve long grasped willpower impact, and I am very familiar with it. I won’t impact you negatively.”

Angelina smiled, seeming to think that Titan was truly trying to give guidance out of kindness. She then said to Rota, “Let me give you some guidance as well. It’s beneficial for you to step into Heaven’s Perception by experiencing the flow of information to your brain in advance.”

Fang Xingjian threw Titan a glance and said, “Let’s start. What am I supposed to do?”

Titan smiled and said, “There’s no need for you to do anything. Just relax.” However, looking at Fang Xingjian’s tightly shut eyes, he suddenly thought of something.

‘This guy is blind? He’s Fang Xingjian?’

Titan was not a martial arts maniac like Hoppes. So, he had naturally heard of the name of this year’s Regional Champion, Fang Xingjian.

However, after recognizing this point, the envy in his heart surged even higher. Especially when he looked at Fang Xingjian’s face, height, and the talent he had revealed, it was impossible to

say that Titan was not jealous.

‘Hmph, so what if you’re a genius. Your ether synchronization rate is definitely not as high as mine. I’ll hit you with the willpower impact one-sidedly and make you look like a fool.’

As he thought of this, he activated his Heaven’s Perception and started trying to launch a willpower impact at Fang Xingjian.

The purpose of willpower impact was to throw one’s memories and martial will at the opponent, attacking and defending on the consciousness level.

This was a skill which one could only deploy when their ether synchronization rate was at 30%. It was because only Conferred Knights with a synchronization rate of 30% or higher would be able to leave information in physical substances.

After Titan activated his Heaven’s Perception, he threw his consciousness toward Fang Xingjian. He had prepared a whole pile of things in his mind, in particular his martial will, hoping to throw Fang Xingjian off his tracks and portray him as a fool.

It would be best if Fang Xingjian fainted or something.

Thinking of this, a hint of a cold smile crept up the corners of Titan’s lips.

Not all Conferred Knights were elegant, with exemplary conduct and noble character. They were merely stronger than ordinary people. However, because of their mental cultivation methods, some of them would not really get into many of fights.

However, there were more Conferred Knights, whose desires also grew stronger after becoming stronger. Furthermore, after becoming Conferred Knights, they needed to fight for more monetary and cultivation resources. Thus, these Conferred Knights might get into fights more easily than when they had been Knights.

Titan, who wanted to make a fool of someone inferior just

because of some feelings of jealousy and fury, was one of them. While there were not many Conferred Knights who were like this, there were still quite a number of them.

However, just as Titan came into contact with Fang Xingjian's body, he suddenly felt that something was amiss. He realized that not only was he transmitting information over, the other side was also transmitting information over to him.

Titan's vision suddenly turned black, as if an overwhelming amount of sand had gushed toward him. The air in the surroundings seemed to have become distorted and scorching hot, like he had entered a great steamer.

‘What’s going on?’

‘What on earth is going on?!

‘To think that there’s such a tremendous amount of information drowning my senses, making me feel as if my body and the environment have truly changed. How on earth did he do that?’

‘How could Fang Xingjian pull something like this?!’

Just as he was thinking this, a violent voice rang out in Titan's mind,

“I, Domirov, am the Sand Country's national hero! Who? Who dares to disturb my sleep?!”

Titan had not expected that the entire surface of Fang Xingjian's skin had been covered by the level 29 Superior Divine Armor, the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor. He had wanted to channel information over to Fang Xingjian through his Heaven's Perception. However, it had instead come into contact with the Superior Divine Weapon and thus triggered a reverse attack from the level 29 expert, Domirov.

To the people watching from the outside, Titan had initially appeared extremely confident. The way he had looked at Fang Xingjian with an expression of great grace, as if he really were a

senior thinking of providing guidance to his junior.

However, Titan's face had suddenly turned pale, and his body started to tremble continuously. He leaped back as if he had just seen a ghost, then he fell onto the ground, convulsing non-stop while perspiring heavily.

“What on earth is going on?!”

“Titan, what's wrong with you?”

“Didn't he attack Fang Xingjian with his willpower impact? Why is he the one who looks like he has just seen a ghost?”

Titan pointed to Fang Xingjian, but his mind was in an absolute mess. Although he had cut off the connection in time, Domirov's damaging prowess was too great and he was not able to say a single word for a while.

Angelina also walked over and squatted down, asking Titan with a concerned look, “Titan, how are you feeling? Are you alright?”

Fang Xingjian fell into a short daze before suddenly lifting up his hand. He could feel the slight changes on the surface of his skin, as if a layer had been torn off.

“Sorry, I forgot that I'm wearing the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor. You must have been struck by the martial will on it.”

Hearing Fang Xingjian's words, Titan finally understood what had just happened. A feeling of exasperation burst out in his heart.

‘Level 29 Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor... You asked me to attack you while you're wearing this thing?! Aren't you going too far?!’

Chapter 276 Departure

If most people were to know Titan's thoughts, they would only be able to sigh. The students around them showed expressions of pity as they looked at Titan, who had collapsed. It was too horrible to be attacked by the residual martial will of a level 29 expert.

The corners of Rota's lips curled up slightly as she snickered in her heart.

Fang Xingjian also understood now. An attack through a flow of information should be about the same as what he had experienced when he withstood Domirov's willpower impact.

He secretly decided that in the future, he would spend some time every day to stimulate the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor and thus train up his ability to resist willpower impact.

It was at this moment that the dim-witted Angelina finally had a reaction. She left Titan and looked at Fang Xingjian in astonishment while saying, "You're Fang Xingjian?"

The other students also turned to look at them. Some of them had managed to recognize Fang Xingjian before this, and now, they were all looking at him with gazes of envy.

There was no other way about it. The level 29 Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor was something that all of them were jealous over. With just the information impact it brought, if one did not have the ether synchronization rate of someone who was either level 28 or level 29, they could forget about trying to suppress Fang Xingjian with their will.

Fang Xingjian nodded to Angelina and said, "That's me."

Angelina immediately went up and walked in a circle around Fang Xingjian like she was looking at a rare animal. She mumbled, "You're that Fang Xingjian who solved all seven levels of the mysteries to the Pantheon Monument and defeated Hoult, who's a

disciple of a Divine level expert?”

Fang Xingjian nodded. Angelina immediately grabbed Fang Xingjian's palm and started stroking it.

“What you're wearing now is the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor? It feels so comfortable to the touch.” She sniffed at Fang Xingjian's palm, and it was as if there were stars twinkling in her eyes.

To Angelina, the attraction of the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor was too great. She had put up several requests to the Royal Weaponry to get this level 29 armor but had never succeeded.

This was because the thing she was most interested in was still the forging of Divine Weapons. She was extremely conversant with powerful Divine Weapons, especially those level 29 Superior Divine Weapons and level 30 Divine Remains Equipments.

Angelina's face was covered with an excited blush, and her hands started touching Fang Xingjian all over. She wore an infatuated expression as she said, “The Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor... Twelve years ago, when the Empire was at war with the Sand Country, His Majesty had stepped out in person to slaughter the top warrior of the Sand Country, Domirov, the national hero.

“Domirov's corpse was later on handed to the masters in Weaponry, who extracted all the blood, bone marrow, and other essences from his body. These were then fused with over 4,000 heavenly and earthly treasures. The masters had spent ten whole years working on this before they were able to succeed in forging it.”

As Angelina looked at the layer of skin on Fang Xingjian, her saliva was almost dripping out due to her strong longing for it. “This texture... it's perfect. This tenacity... perfect. This glow and color... to think that it's exactly the same as a real human's flesh... perfect. It's simply too perfect.”

Rota moved Angelina's hands away with a cold look and said, "Teacher, please mind your manners."

"Ahh, right, right, right." Angelina wiped the corner of her lips in embarrassment. She then looked at Fang Xingjian with bright, shining eyes and said, "Erm... Xingjian... Do you want to join my Divine Weapon research team? We have the best masters in the entire Great Western Region who can create the best Divine Weapons in the entire Great Western Region."

Hearing that, Rota's initially cold expression changed slightly, and she spoke with glittering eyes, "It's the Divine Weapon team led by Governor Devitt?"

"Hmmm? How did you know?" Angelina looked at Rota and asked, puzzled.

Rota smiled with her straight eyebrows rising up as she said, "Lord Devitt himself is the greatest master in forging Divine Weapons in the Great Western Region. Of course, the academy's Divine Weapon team is led by him."

With that, she stared at Fang Xingjian, as if urging him on to give his reply.

Entering the Divine Weapon team would allow him to not only get closer to Governor Devitt but train his ability to forge Divine Weapons as well. Moreover, the research team led by the Governor would definitely have no shortage of money. After entering the team for one or two years, one would probably be able to get their hands on a few sets of Divine Weapon equipment.

"That's right, that's right. Lord Devitt is there too. His level is very high!" Angelina looked at Fang Xingjian in great anticipation and said, "When you join us, we'll definitely study you in great detail... Oh, I mean, we'll definitely be able to work together to study Divine Weapons."

All the other students, including Titan, all looked at Fang

Xingjian enviously.

Regardless if it was the slender, capable, and valiant looking Rota, or the mature looking, dim-witted female teacher with a curvy figure, Angelina.... both of them were great beauties who were hard to find.

Moreover, one of them was a senior Conferred Knight, while the other was someone who was on the way to becoming a Conferred Knight... As the other students watched Fang Xingjian being surrounded by two such beauties, how could they not be envious?

Moreover, Fang Xingjian was also tall and handsome, a genius amongst geniuses, and wore a level 29 Divine Armor. He could really be said to be a winner in life.

That being the case, it could also be said that as Conferred Knights, everyone present was a winner in life. However, when Fang Xingjian appeared, they experienced how their companions had looked at them in the past. This guy was really the winner amongst winners.

However, there was no way for Fang Xingjian to agree to Angelina's invitation. With him being strapped for time and feeling that he had not gained enough power, how could he waste time on studying the forging of Divine Weapons?

Moreover, he already had the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor. Fang Xingjian did not believe that, after joining this team, he would be able to get equipments which were better than the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor.

Therefore, Fang Xingjian shook his head and said, "I can't. I don't have the time for it. Sorry."

"Ah." Angelina's brows furrowed slightly as she looked at Fang Xingjian with her pair of large watery eyes, appearing like she was a young lady being bullied.

"You really can't join us? Why don't you give it more thought

first?” She grabbed Fang Xingjian’s palm and kept stroking it, as if she was looking at her beloved toy. “After you join us, I’ll definitely teach you well. Divine Weapons are really very interesting.”

It was as if the sounds of breaking glasses could be heard coming from the other male students’ hearts.

Titan was so angry that he trembled once again, feeling as if his consciousness was being thrown into more chaos.

Rota let out a cough and then gently pried Angelina’s and Fang Xingjian’s hands apart again. Simultaneously, she glared at Fang Xingjian.

Fang Xingjian rubbed his brows, feeling this was absurd, but he still spoke with persistence, “I’m sorry. I really don’t have time to participate in research teams. Oh, right. I still have something to attend to. I’ll take my leave first.”

With that, he took a few steps, while creating a few streams of sword Qis, and headed for the direction of the Killing Techniques Hall. After attending the class and understanding the willpower impact of Conferred Knights, he could consider it as having gained new information. Fang Xingjian then decided to carry on with his initial plan on taking a stroll in the Killing Techniques Hall.

Rota let out a cold snort and followed behind him.

Chapter 277 Killing Techniques Hall

“Excuse me, may I ask for the directions to the Sword Arts Department’s Killing Techniques Palace?”

A maid, face flushed red, pointed out the way for Fang Xingjian before anxiously heading off.

Rota walked up behind Fang Xingjian, revealing an ambiguous smile, saying, “Recently, you’ve been quite popular with the ladies.”

“Is that so?” Fang Xingjian turned to ‘look’ at her, asking, “What business do you have with me?”

“You’re heading to the Killing Techniques Palace? To pick up Killing techniques? But the Killing techniques in the Killing Techniques Hall...” Rota was suddenly struck by realization and she stared at Fang Xingjian in surprise, asking, “You’ve completed your second transition?”

Seeing Fang Xingjian nod, her gaze was filled with curiosity as she immediately asked, “What job did you transition to?” However, a thought immediately struck her and she added, “If it’s not convenient, you don’t have to tell me.”

Fang Xingjian did not find it inconvenient. For him right now, he no longer had to keep many things hidden. On the contrary, he should bring them out to astonish his enemies or to attract potential investors.

Therefore, he said, “Heavenly Sword Sovereign. It gives an additional 10 points to each of my five main attributes.” As for the specialties, they were considered private and he had no plans of sharing them.

“Heavenly Sword Sovereign? Why haven’t I heard of it before?” When she heard that it gave him an additional 10 point increase to each of his five attributes, Rota immediately said in surprise, “An

average of 10 point increase to each of the attributes? The second transition job that I know of with the highest increase is only at an average of 8 to 9 points.”

She nodded. “It’s no wonder that you want to head to the Killing Techniques Palace. Having completed the second transition successfully, you are eligible to pick up the Killing techniques for Conferred Knights.”

Seeing that she continued to follow him, Fang Xingjian asked, “You’re going as well?”

Rota’s brows twitched, unleashing a valiant aura, “Why, you have a problem with that?”

Fang Xingjian shrugged. It did not matter to him. Although the two seemed as if they were chatting leisurely as they walked, they were in fact moving at subsonic speed, arriving at the entrance of a huge manor.

Just the door to the entrance was over five meters tall, and there were many rooms and walls behind it.

This was the Sword Arts Department’s Killing Techniques Palace. The Killing Techniques Palace had many pavilions and buildings and looked like a Royal Palace.

Rota seemed to have been slightly overwhelmed by the majesty of the Killing Techniques Palace, letting out an exhale, “The Regional Academy is really rich. Just this Killing Techniques Palace alone would probably be worth more than the entire First Academy.”

Fang Xingjian replied, “One is for prefectural Knights while the other is for Conferred Knights of a great region, led by the number one character in the Great Western Region. Of course they would be worlds apart.”

As the two of them chatted, they had already entered the door and arrived at the first hall in the Killing Techniques Palace.

Before he went in, he saw a huge gold colored sword standing

upright in the middle of the hall. The huge gold colored sword was pierced into the ground, appearing as if it was going to split the ground into two, releasing dreary killing aura.

And beneath the huge sword, there was an elegant looking middle-aged man with a moustache draping down from both sides of his mouth. The man was seated there, holding onto a book and studying it in great detail.

In front of him, there were two Knights holding swords and practicing a set of sword technique. The two of them appeared to be very familiar with the stances, sending out sword lights as they practiced. What that was most terrifying was that as their longswords moved, streams of gold colored light were gathering around their swords, occasionally unleashing streams of thunderbolt.

This was clearly a sword technique which allowed one to control thunderbolts and use them against the opponents.

The elegant looking middle-age man seemed to have sensed that someone had entered. He threw a glance at Fang Xingjian before saying, “There are four stages to the Sword Arts Killing Techniques Palace. At each stage, you’ll pick up a sword technique. When you’ve defeated the mentor on duty, you’ll be allowed to proceed to the next stage.”

With that, he pointed to the huge sword behind him and said, “The Thunderbolt Sword Technique for the first stage is recorded on it. You guys can just take a look for yourself.”

Hearing his words, Rota frowned and asked in a soft voice, “Why is it that you can only pick up the next technique after defeating the mentor? Can’t you pick whichever one you wish to learn?”

Although her voice was very soft, the people present were all second transition Conferred Knights and it was impossible for them to not be able to hear what she said. One of the guys who was practicing the Thunderbolt Sword Technique could not hold it in,

threw a sideward glance toward the two of them before saying in an arrogant tone, “You guys must be new? Since when is the Killing Techniques Palace something that you can comment about as you wish?”

“These are the four sets of sword techniques which the great masters in the Sword Arts Department had spent many years to intensively develop and refine after extracting the essence from thousands or even tens of thousands of sword techniques. These four Killing techniques have been ranked in terms of difficulty, starting from the easiest. After mastering the first technique, one can then pick up the second technique. And when the second technique has been mastered, the person would be able to synthesize the techniques together before picking up the third technique and synthesizing them again. All of them are great complements of each other.

“With every new sword technique picked up and synthesized, the sword technique’s prowess would increase by multiple folds. And when all four sets of sword techniques have been synthesized together, one would be able to learn the ultimate technique of the Killing Techniques Palace, the Ninth Heaven Deity Exterminating Slash.

“Hmph, if you don’t know, then don’t make random guesses. The Great Western Region Regional Academy has been through the establishments and transformations of many generations of seniors. Each inch and each step has their own reasons for existing. You guys are better off talking less and working more. This is the true path of cultivation.”

With that, he stopped looking at Fang Xingjian and Rota, and went back to practicing his Thunderbolt Sword Technique by himself.

Rota’s countenance turned a little grim, but the other party was stronger than her and what he said also made more sense. There was no way that she could rebut. She could only let out a cold snort

and then turned her attention to that huge gold colored sword.

She squinted slightly and could see there were many densely packed words carved out on the huge sword. They were the cultivation method of the Thunderbolt Sword Technique, listed out in detail. There were also many diagrams and human silhouettes.

Fang Xingjian also walked up to it and started reading the Thunderbolt Sword Technique. With one look, he discovered that this Thunderbolt Sword Technique was truly much more complicated than ordinary Killing techniques. Not only did it incorporate the principles of using the muscles, vital energy and blood, between each and every stance, one would need to ceaselessly exchange energies with the ether particles in the surroundings, thus gaining the powers of the thunderbolt.

There were other sword techniques that tapped on lightning, but those required one to transform their own powers in exchange for the power of lightning.

However, this Thunderbolt Sword Technique was a sword technique which transform a portion of one's powers to create a thunderbolt that was ten times stronger. It was truly one which tapped into the tremendous powers of the heaven and earth.

Fang Xingjian read the introduction. This Thunderbolt Sword Technique started from stimulating thunder to summoning lightning, and eventually, when one reached level 10, they would be able to reach the state of being able to summon destructive thunderbolts. Its prowess basically went from an ordinary electric baton to blasts of lightning, creating an astonishing damaging force.

Each swing of the sword, each stance, would allow one to absorb the powers of the ether particles in the surroundings, turn them into lightning, and then appear as tens of thousands of thunderbolts. It would be able to melt iron and steel easily at high

temperatures that could reach tens of thousands degrees. The explosion caused from a single attack would be sufficient to wipe out half a street.

‘This Thunderbolt Sword Technique is truly powerful.’

Fang Xingjian nodded. Although this Thunderbolt Sword Technique was very powerful and complicated, how could it stump the Fang Xingjian of today? Just his Genius Swordsmanship, Sword Specialist, Unparalleled Sword Intent and the Darkness Sword Sense specialties had already increased his senses and understandings of sword arts and ether particles by multiple folds. Furthermore, he had the world’s topmost sword arts talent.

This Thunderbolt Sword Technique was the first sword technique in the Sword Arts Killing Techniques Palace, the simplest one of the four. Compared to the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash from the Eight Prized Techniques of the West, it was also much simpler.

It only took Fang Xingjian about five minutes to read through the Thunderbolt Sword Technique and to get a general grasp of it. In addition, a new technique appeared on his Stats Window—Level 1 Thunderbolt Sword Technique.

Chapter 278 Thunderbolt Sword Technique

The mentors in the Killing Techniques Palace had rotational duties since, as Conferred Knights, they had too many tasks, and they could only take turns to do things like providing guidance on sword arts.

Usually, other than the four and a half hours in the morning and four and a half hours in the afternoon, there were no mentors on duty for the rest of the day.

Oftentimes the person on duty was not a teacher, and was instead a student.

However, the sword arts mastery of these students was not to be underestimated either. They had all reached the maximum level in the sword technique that they were mentoring. They could even have started practicing the sword techniques from the later stages of the Killing Techniques Palace and had either completed or were trying to complete the skills synthesis.

Of course, even after they have completed the synthesis, they would still know the essence to the Thunderbolt Sword Technique and could still perform it.

Now, the one on duty for the Thunderbolt Sword Technique was a student by the name of Duolun. He was ranked thirty-eighth in the academy, and his Thunderbolt Sword Technique was at the maximum level of 15.

It was not possible for them to send someone too strong to be on duty for the first stage of the Killing Techniques Palace. After all, if they were to get the Conferred Knights who were ranked in the top three to station here, it would firstly, be a waste of the experts' time, and secondly, cause the students who came to pick up the Thunderbolt Sword Technique to be unable to pass the stage and learn the sword techniques to follow.

However, even if this was the case, defeating Duolun, who had reached level 15 in his Thunderbolt Sword Technique, would still take a bit of hard work.

It was just like how the two students there had been staying at the first stage, practicing the Thunderbolt Sword Technique, for the past few months. Based on Duolun's estimation, they would probably still need another year before they could defeat him, pass the first stage, and move on to the next one.

As for a novice like Fang Xingjian, it seemed to Duolun that he would probably have to take an even longer time, especially in the earlier phase when he was just starting to pick up the technique. It was really a waste of his time.

Therefore, after watching Fang Xingjian read the Thunderbolt Sword Technique, Duolun let out a reluctant sigh and put down the the manual to the Mountain Shifting Sword. This was the manual to the sword technique for the next stage and was something that he had copied down and would read whenever he had to be on duty at the first stage.

The reason he put down the manual was because he knew that Fang Xingjian would definitely pose questions to him as he read, requesting his guidance. Therefore, he decided he might as well stop reading the manual.

However, to his astonishment, Fang Xingjian only took a glance through the Thunderbolt Sword Technique and did not approach him, but instead, started practicing by himself.

The Styx had been damaged during the Regional Selection, so Fang Xingjian could only temporarily use his level 9 Divine Weapon, the Demoness' Howl, that he had purchased in Kirst's black market.

However, he had the Heavenly Sword Sovereign's specialty—Swordless Path. With that, even the level 9 Demoness' Howl was strengthened into a level 19 Inferior Divine Weapon. It glimmered

all over like an Effulgence Weapon.

However, although he had the Swordless Path, replacing his longsword continued to be one of the reasons he needed to earn money. He could even possibly be like how he went shopping in Kirst previously, purchasing a tremendous amount of rare items to strengthen himself.

It would be best if he could purchase a level 29 Superior Divine Weapon.

“Hey, the Thunderbolt Sword Technique is not just any ordinary Killing technique. It extracts the energy from the ether particles in space and forms attacks with thunderbolts. If it’s not used properly, you’ll hurt yourself. If you practice by yourself after just a quick glance at the technique like this...”

Duolun stopped halfway through his words. It was because although Fang Xingjian, who was swinging the Demoness’ Howl, had appeared a bit awkward when displaying the moves at the very start, he had started to become more familiar after a few more moves. When Duolun was in the middle of his little speech, streams of electricity had appeared from the space in the surroundings and, as Fang Xingjian’s Demoness’ Howl pierced through the air, turned into streams of electric snakes, slithering around Fang Xingjian.

“What kind of joke is this?”

“He has already reached level 1 in the Thunderbolt Sword Technique?”

The two other students also looked at Fang Xingjian with astonishment written all over their faces, as if they could not believe what Fang Xingjian had achieved.

Rota smiled proudly. She did not know why, but when she saw the astonished looks on the trio’s faces, she felt a strong sense of pride.

She could not help but say, “Haven’t you guys heard of this year’s Regional Champion, Fang Xingjian? He was the one who comprehended all seven levels of mysteries to the Pantheon Monument. How could a mere Thunderbolt Sword Technique pose as a challenge to him?”

Hearing Rota’s words, Duolun regained his senses, “That’s right, this guy has always had his eyes closed. I thought it was just how his eyes looked, but he’s actually blind. It’s said that Fang Xingjian is blind.”

As the few of them were immersed in a short moment of astonishment, the longsword in Fang Xingjian’s hand was like the lightning in the sky, darting about at quick speed, penetrating through the air, creating loud, thunderous sounds.

And as he continued to swing the longsword, the electricity increased in number and intensity. In the blink of an eye, it became like a huge, sphere-shaped ball of lightning, encompassing Fang Xingjian entirely.

“Lightning at this level...level 2? No, he’s either at level 3 or 4 now.” Duolun could no longer remain calm, jumping up in shock and looking at Fang Xingjian as if he was looking at a deity.

It was true that when one picked up a sword technique as fast as Fang Xingjian did, to ordinary people, their existences were like that of deities.

Fang Xingjian had no intention of trying to hide his progress. The force from his sword changed again. Streams of sword Qi and lightning connected together, and the densely packed lightning gradually became condensed and compacted, turning into many thunderbolt dragons that resembled streams of plasma. They gathered around Fang Xingjian’s sword and continued to move around as he swung his sword.

Fang Xingjian’s Thunderbolt Sword Technique seemed to be improving rapidly at a speed that could be seen by the naked eye. It

absorbed the energies from the ether particles in space, increasing the numbers of electric currents around him which were jumping and flying around like little spirits and were as docile the puppies one trained at home.

The students who had been practicing the Thunderbolt Sword Technique no longer had the arrogance from before, but rather, felt a bit embarrassed by their earlier attitudes. They felt as if they had been shamelessly flaunting their meager skills before a great master.

However, they refused to leave or to lower their heads, for fear that they would miss out on the dance of Fang Xingjian's sword.

They watched as Fang Xingjian continued to perform the Thunderbolt Sword Technique, drawing out a beautiful trail with his longsword. Fang Xingjian's vital energy and blood as well as his muscles and bones continued to move incessantly, changing his body's frequencies.

The ether particles from his body and outside his body continued to exchange at great speed, producing a violent flow of energy.

After looking at Fang Xingjian's sword dance, they seemed to have gained new understandings toward the many sword theories they had either not known or did not understand previously.

They watched Fang Xingjian's sword dance with great hunger and thirst, as if they were watching a mentor providing guidance. The way Fang Xingjian had continued to correct himself and improved was something that they could only dream of watching.

Ten minutes, thirty minutes, and eventually, one hour passed by. Everyone present quietly watched as Fang Xingjian waved the Demoness' Howl. The surrounding electric currents became increasingly dense, and they could feel a faint numbing sensation.

The few electric dragons around Fang Xingjian were shining in a glaring, brilliant white color, as if hundreds of incandescent light

bulbs were stacked together, causing the others to be unable to see his silhouette clearly.

Finally, Fang Xingjian withdrew his force, and a myriad of thunderous sword cries rang out. All the electric dragons converged, turning into a pillar of thunderbolts that soared into the air from the tip of Fang Xingjian's sword and eventually slashed down onto the ground.

Chapter 279 Challenge

Amidst the thunderous tremors, Rota was the first to give in, covering her ears as her face turned pale.

The other three Conferred Knights did not feel too good either, and with a grunt, they retreated.

The violent thunderbolt pillar pierced through the air, and the air currents became like boiling water as they flowed out in all directions while carrying a charred smell.

Everyone felt a numbing sensation run through their bodies. This was the aftermath of the thunderbolt pillar... Just the electrons in the surrounding air were sufficient to make them paralyzed and render them immobile.

They felt that they were being encompassed by high temperatures from the endless explosions. All they could do was activate their Reduced Force Field in order to fend off against them frantically.

A piercing glow flashed. Indistinctly, it looked like a huge dragon had formed from a stream of thunderbolts, swallowing the earth and drilling into the ground.

When the light gradually dissipated, there was only a large hole in the surface which was over five meters deep. The bottom of the hole had a large amount of glazed crystals, as if lava had just flowed past the surface of the crystals.

Countless bolts of lightning had created a high temperature which reached several tens of thousands degrees and disintegrated the entire piece of land.

To think that such a terrifying destructive power could be created just by channeling the power of the thunderbolt into the ground.

Duolun looked at Fang Xingjian with a complicated expression

and mumbled, “Level 10? His Thunderbolt Sword Technique is already at level 10?”

“Haha, for him to be capable of bringing the Thunderbolt Sword Technique to level 10 in just slightly over an hour... What does that make us, who have spent such a long period of time in cultivation just to raise our levels?”

As for the other two students, they were both in a daze.

Since when had they ever come across a person who was able to bring the Thunderbolt Sword Technique up to level 10 in just about an hour?

Rota looked at this scene with great pride and yearning, as if she was the one who had accomplished this.

However, Duolun did not care about all these. He just went straight to the point and asked, “Has your Thunderbolt Sword Technique reached level 10?” His gaze was extremely solemn, and he spoke in a very serious tone.

Fang Xingjian nodded, saying with slight dissatisfaction, “It’s at level 10. I realize that my efficiency has slowed down. I’ll probably not be able to reach the maximum level at one go.”

Hearing Fang Xingjian’s words, Duolun only felt great sorrow. Fang Xingjian had spent an hour to reach level 10 for the Thunderbolt Sword Technique but was still not satisfied with it. What then, did that make of their long years of training in the Killing Techniques Palace?

Duolun could only say sourly, “More haste makes for less speed. You’re progressing too fast and may not have been able to grasp a lot of the foundation. This may slow you down on your path to the maximum level.”

Hearing this, the other two students, bound by a common hatred, nodded as well. However, Rota was not happy with this. She rebutted, “No matter how slow his progress is, it’s still faster

than the progress of anyone else trying to learn the Thunderbolt Sword Technique.”

When Duolun heard this, he was almost driven to death in fury. However, when she saw Rota, he did not think that it was good to quarrel with a beautiful young lady. So, he had no choice but to stare daggers at Fang Xingjian as did the other two students.

However, Fang Xingjian did not care about all these. He tapped the Demoness’ Howl slightly and said to Duolun, “Please give me your guidance.”

Duolun’s eyes narrowed slightly. “You’re challenging me at the Thunderbolt Sword Technique?” He seemed to find Fang Xingjian somewhat unbelievable.

Fang Xingjian nodded and said seriously, “Don’t I have to defeat you before I can learn the later Killing techniques?”

“Haha, you think you can defeat me... You really are confident.” Duolun’s expression had a hint of jest to it, “What level are you at now? What’s your synchronization rate?”

Rota also walked up and advised, “Xingjian, why are you in such a hurry? You’ve only learned the technique for an hour. You should strengthen your foundations for the Thunderbolt Sword Technique and challenge him when you’ve reached the maximum level.”

“How can practicing alone beat the speed of learning when sparring with an expert who cultivates the same sword technique? It’s fine if there’s no such chance with other instances, but since the Killing Techniques Palace provides this opportunity, how can I miss it?”

Fang Xingjian stroked the Demoness’ Howl, which had been strengthened by the Swordless Path until it became a level 19 weapon, and said again, “Please give me your guidance.”

“Hmph, what you’ve said is not wrong. Whether or not you’ve

practiced the right way, you'll know after you've sparred with an expert."

Duolun stood up and looked at Fang Xingjian with great arrogance. Ranked 38th this year, Duolun was at level 22, and his Thunderbolt Sword Technique was at level 15. Even if Fang Xingjian was more talented than him, it would be impossible for Fang Xingjian to win him without putting in a few months worth of work.

Fang Xingjian might not be able to defeat Duolun even after a few months.

Duolun drew out a purple colored longsword which had electricity flowing around it. This was a level 19 Superior Divine Weapon, and it had a strong strengthening effect to the Thunderbolt Sword Technique.

Duolun held the sword in a reverse grip, with the lateral side of the sword pointing at Fang Xingjian. Then while carrying an air of superiority, he said to Fang Xingjian, "Make your move. I'll give you some guidance on your sword technique so that you..."

Before Duolun even finished his words, a flash of sword light shone out before him. He barely managed to fend off Fang Xingjian's attack off by putting up his sword up horizontally.

What a fast attack!

Thunderous booms rang out as their longswords clashed, simultaneously releasing streams of electricity. While breaking out in cold sweat, Duolun retreated.

However, Fang Xingjian's attacks had always been relentless and unforgiving. He created a whole series of afterimages, and the wind imprints on the sword slashed through the scorching air incessantly, releasing piercing shrills.

At the same time, rumbles of thunder tremored in space with each sword attack, and streams of lightning hit Duolun.

However, since the Thunderbolt Sword Technique controlled lightning and electricity, how could Duolun be hurt by them? He performed the move, Lightning Conduction, and countless lightning strikes conducted into the ground through his body, keeping him unhurt.

However, being driven into such a pathetic state by Fang Xingjian right from the start infuriated Duolun. He decided in his heart that he was going to teach Fang Xingjian, this genius who did not know his limits, a good lesson. When Duolun's Thunderbolt Sword Technique was fully unleashed, the densely packed thunderbolts in the air exploded, and waves of explosions headed toward Fang Xingjian.

Fang Xingjian also used the Lightning Conduction stance to receive this attack. Then with a horizontal sweep of his sword, he countered with a Thunderbolt Strike.

The two of them took turns to unleash their attacks as they moved around in the hall. Each time their swords clashed, thunderous sounds would ring out, and electricity flashed out in all directions.

White lights flashed on and off, continuously lighting up their silhouettes. As the lights pierced through the air, they created a series of high temperature explosions.

Amidst the thunder and lightning, streams of lightning moved around their bodies ceaselessly, occasionally hitting the ground and leaving behind black charred marks.

If ordinary Knights were to face these thunderbolts, just a small lightning strike would probably cause them to lose any ability to resist.

Rota and the others had retreated out of the hall long ago and were standing outside the door. They watched the two silhouettes move around incessantly amidst the electric currents while creating a myriad of thunderbolt strike collisions, which then

caused explosions and high temperatures. The scene looked like there were two thunderstorms battling each other in a fight for territory.

One of the students looked at this scene in astonishment. “What is happening? Brother Duolun... Brother Duolun isn’t able to defeat him?”

“It’s not just that he’s unable to defeat him...” The other student was watching the scene with his eyes shining like two light bulbs. “This guy... He’s starting to gain the upper hand.”

Chapter 280 Passing the Stage

Putting aside the two students' astonishment, Duolun, who was engaged in battle, was even more astonished.

It was because no matter how much he increased his attacking prowess, giving it his all, it was easily neutralized by his opponent.

No matter how fast or how furious his sword attacks were, his opponent was able to see through their flaws. Before, he was unable to display any decent attacks, since they were automatically neutralized by his opponent's attacks, forcing him to switch to defence.

No matter how much the numbers of the thunderbolts increased or how violent they were, for his opponent it was still like taking an idle stroll in the courtyard. He was able to conduct them into the ground without suffering the slightest injury.

Of course, Duolun was still unaware that Fang Xingjian was wearing the level 29 Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor. Even if lightning struck him, he would still be safe.

Moreover, Fang Xingjian currently has activated his level 1 Unparalleled Sword Intent and the Darkness Sword Sense. With these, he was able to remain on the upper hand when he was dealing with an opponent who was also a swordsman.

In the image Fang Xingjian had created in his mind through Heaven's Perception, there were countless glimmering starlights over Duolun's body. The brighter the lights were, the greater the flaws. These glimmers disappeared as soon as they appeared. Sometimes, even though they appeared extremely bright in the first instant, the next moment they would turn dull.

However, this was sufficient for Fang Xingjian. It was because his sword technique was fast enough, and because he could easily neutralize the flaws in Duolun's moves which shone on his body.

Once Duolun made a move, he would be forced to change midway, and defend against Fang Xingjian's full-powered counterattack before he could even unleash 30% of his previous move's prowess.

Therefore, although Duolun's physical strength rated higher than Fang Xingjian's, he was being pushed back by his opponent.

Unless he could completely ignore the sharpness of his opponent's longsword and attack in an irregular way, he would have no choice but to be pushed back time and time again by Fang Xingjian's level 19 longsword, which was encompassed by layers of electric dragons.

As for the thunderbolts called forth from void space, they were like countless ripples to Fang Xingjian. The powers released from the exchange with ether particles were like falling leaves landing on a pond as they made ripples in the air.

The central point of each ripple was where the power of the thunderbolt was the weakest. Fang Xingjian just needed to follow the changes of the waves to be able to move through the myriad of thunderbolts with ease.

Level 1 Unparalleled Sword Intent together with Darkness Sword Sense... The combination of these two specialties which facilitated his understanding of sword moves and ether particles and also allowing him to neutralize their impacts, was showing an astonishing effect in the first battle where Fang Xingjian had employed them.

They allowed Fang Xingjian to swiftly understand the changes of the human body when using the sword, the flow of ether particles, the process of exchanging energies with ether particles, and then to find the flaws and weaknesses in that instant. His Heaven's Perception would then sense the changes to the information, and clearly reflect them in the image constructed in his brain.

And the last thing that he had to do was to follow this feeling,

and to analyze how to easily neutralize the opponent's attacks.

The two of them fought increasingly faster while performing the Thunderbolt Sword Technique. The entire hall was now filled with thunderstorms.

Both Duolun and Fang Xingjian, while performing the same sword technique, were trying hard to fight for the control over the powers of the thunderbolts.

At the start, Duolun almost had a control of over 70%, with an absolute upper hand, which had left Fang Xingjian only with the ability to defend.

However, as Fang Xingjian continued to break through Duolun's moves time and time again, neutralizing the lightnings around Duolun, the ratio of their control started to change.

Duolun's absolute advantage also went down from 70% to 65%, 55%, 50%...

As the percentage of his control fell as fast as a waterfall, the perspiration on Duolun's forehead also increased. When his control reached a mere 20%, almost all the thunderbolts in the hall were attacking him.

The ground continued to tremor, holes after holes appearing from the explosions caused by the lightning strikes. It was as if Duolun was trapped in a cage made of lightning, with countless lightning strikes heading toward him one after another, and making him feel as if he would soon be dying from exhaustion.

When the final boom rang out, Duolun was no longer able to conduct the thunderbolts into the ground, and he was sent flying out from the explosion. He went through the walls of the hall, and went on to be blasted out of it.

“Ahhh!”

With a loud bellow, Duolun unleashed his Reduced Force Field abruptly, making all the rocks on him fly off. However, his

appearance was still like that of a refugee, covered in crushed sand and dust.

He was still thinking of returning to the hall, but when he tried to exert a little force with his legs, a strong numbing sensation met him. To think that he was unable to move a single inch! He was paralyzed from the electric shock.

‘I’ve actually lost to someone who has only just learned the Thunderbolt Sword Technique...’

A powerful feeling of embarrassment grew in Duolun.

Just then, the sound of rocks crumbling rang out again. Duolun lifted his head and saw Fang Xingjian gradually walking out from the hole in the wall Duolun had created. Duolun saw the myriad of electrical snakes encompassing Fang Xingjian, and watched as they incessantly continued to pierce through the air, slithering about as if they were alive.

Then, the electric snakes heated up the air, creating pitter-patter explosion sounds. Duolun’s pupils contracted.

Any of these electric snakes had at least the prowess of a howitzer[1]. Looking at the myriad of electric snakes slithering around Fang Xingjian’s body, Duolun’s hair stood up as he asked in a muffled voice, “Your Thunderbolt Sword Technique is at level 12 now?”

This was an effect he had been able to accomplish only when his Thunderbolt Sword Technique had reached level 12. Moreover, the electric snakes he had been able to create were not as many, nor as agile as Fang Xingjian’s.

Fang Xingjian nodded, answering, “All thanks to you. As expected, to improve one’s sword arts mastery, the most effective way is to have a spar with an expert.

“Are we going again?”

Looking at Fang Xingjian’s calm expression, a hint of a chill

sprouted in Duolun's heart. What was the point of going for a second round? The other party could crush him completely with a mere level 10 Thunderbolt Sword Technique, let alone one of level 12.

When he saw that the other two students had also appeared, this emotion got even stronger and the feelings of embarrassment continued to surge. Duolun left immediately, without another word.

A thought kept appearing in his mind: Fang Xingjian had been able to defeat his several years' hard work only an hour after learning the technique. With a Conferred Knight like this in the sword arts domain, was there a need for him to continue learning sword arts?

At this point, Duolun even had the idea to stop practicing sword arts and to switch to another area of martial arts.

What he did not know was that as Fang Xingjian continued to progress, there would be many people, who, like himself, would be dealt a blow, ending up losing the confidence to continue learning sword arts.

Looking on as Duolun departed, Fang Xingjian tilted his head and said, "This... should count as my win?"

The other two students exchanged a glance, unable to say a single word.

Rota smiled and said, "The person on duty for this stage has fled, of course it's considered your win. "

Fang Xingjian shook his head, saying, "Then it's time to go to the next stage."

Rota smiled and followed behind Fang Xingjian. This guy with outstanding talent seemed to have the ability to surprise her every time they met. He was like a treasure box that kept on multiplying, releasing endless mysteries and grandeur each time it was opened.

One of the students immediately shouted, “You... You haven’t passed the stage! You can’t go in!”

Rota’s brows twitched and she turned, saying, “I don’t practice the sword. Even if I were to enter, I won’t be able to learn your Killing techniques. Moreover, don’t you guys wish to see which stage Fang Xingjian could reach today?”

The two students fell into a short daze, and after Fang Xingjian and Rota had walked a distance away, a clear sense of hesitation appeared on their faces.

“It seems meaningless for us to stay here too, right?”

“Even Brother Duolun has left. What’s the difference between practicing here and practicing elsewhere?”

“Let’s go take a look?”

“Let’s go take a look. We can warn the seniors from the next stage. This guy is too creepy.”

[1] A type of artillery item characterized by a relatively short barrel and the use of comparatively small propellant charges to propel projectiles over relatively high trajectories, with a steep angle of descent. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Howitzer>

Chapter 281 Canyon

Rota followed Fang Xingjian into the Killing Techniques Palace's second hall. However, the hall for this stage was many times bigger than the one from the previous level. Or rather, this place could not be considered a palace anymore.

A stretch of meandering canyons lay before Fang Xingjian and Rota. It was over two hundred meters deep, a couple hundred meters long, and had valleys which could be as wide as a hundred meters or as narrow as ten meters.

This was was a canyon built within the Killing Techniques Palace? The entire stretch of canyon looked as if someone had descended from the heavens, slashing their way through. Densely packed vegetation covered the bottom of the canyon, and there were even signs of animals living there.

To think that many pavilions and buildings were surrounded an enormous valley! What a majestic sight! How tremendous an amount of money had been spent! Even Fang Xingjian, who had gotten used to seeing the astounding buildings on Earth, could not help but be slightly astonished witnessing this scene.

Rota, next to him, was even more astonished. She looked at the staircase leading downward into the deepest part of the valley and said, "The second hall is within this canyon? Or is the entire canyon the second hall?"

"Is this canyon something that was here originally? Or did someone slash through the stone to make it?"

Having seen the maze created by the Melancholic Monarch, she did not dare to say with certainty that it had been shaped by nature.

Fang Xingjian shook his head. He could only sense things within a ten meter radius with his Heaven's Perception, unable to

perceive an overview of the entire canyon. Rota turned, looking at Fang Xingjian, and suddenly said, “Hmm? Your eyes...”

Fang Xingjian opened his eyes. Other than the deeper pitch-black pupils, they did not appear any different from ordinary people’s eyes. He seemed just like a normal person.

Fang Xingjian calmly said, “The sparring from earlier leveled up my Thunderbolt Sword Technique and increased my understanding of ether particles. My ether synchronization rate has reached 15% and I can now transform visual information. I feel as if I can get more used to it if I keep my eyes open.”

This meant that Fang Xingjian’s current visual abilities were similar to ordinary peoples’. However, what was different was that the information he received did not come from his eyes, but through Heaven’s Perception. Furthermore, it only had a ten meter range.

Rota nodded, still trying to digest the news that Fang Xingjian’s ether synchronization rate had reached 15%. The rate of his progress was appalling.

She had yet to attain Heaven’s Perception. However, Fang Xingjian had not only completed his job transition, but was also steadily making breakthroughs, having raised his ether synchronization rate to 15%. The speed of his progress was truly too fast!

She subconsciously walked behind Fang Xingjian. Looking at Fang Xingjian’s back, Rota suddenly had a disheartening feeling.

‘Can I... really catch up to him?’

However, this feeling only persisted for a short while. Rota straightened up her posture, chest out, eyes full of determination. Her gaze when looking at Fang Xingjian was filled with fighting spirit.

‘What’s impossible about it? What Fang Xingjian can do, I can do

too.

‘Even if I can’t do everything, the higher his progress, the greater the difficulties he will encounter. His speed will eventually slow down. As long as I give it my all, I’ll definitely have the chance to catch up to him.’

Youngsters, especially those who had become Conferred Knights... Which of them lacked the confidence to change the world? It was at this point in life that they all felt that they were the best.

Although Rota had seen how strong Fang Xingjian was, she had not been dealt a blow big enough to lose her fighting spirit. On the contrary, she reaffirmed her determination to put in great work so as to catch up to him.

‘When I go back today, I’ll increase my training. By the end of this month, I must attain Heaven’s Perception.’

Of course, Fang Xingjian could not sense Rota’s thoughts. He continued along the canyon’s path. The deeper he went, the more he felt that the valleys in the area were getting increasingly steep. The stairs they were walking on were almost as if they had been carved on the cliff walls, while the depth of the valley seemed to be waiting for them at the bottom. It was as if they would fall with just a miss of their steps.

This feeling became especially clear when there were many twists and turns in the canyon, and even meandering steps, which increased the distance that they had to cover.

However, they were a Conferred Knight and a Knight respectively, with physical attributes that far surpassed ordinary people. Although such a path would be impossible for ordinary people, to them it would merely represent a strange scenery. After walking for several hundred meters and making countless twists and turns, they finally arrived at a tremendous platform.

The platform bulged out from the cliff walls. Or perhaps it ought not to be called a platform, since it was basically in the shape of a sword, as if there was a huge sword piercing out of the cliff walls.

They were halfway through the valley, and over a hundred meters away from its bottom. What lay at the bottom were countless shadows, making it almost impossible to see what hid behind them.

To be able to create a huge sword platform like this which connected with the cliff walls in the middle of the valley... The workmanship was uncanny.

Rota's gaze was once again filled with astonishment. There was no need for a display of sword techniques, strength, or battles of any kind... Just a simple platform in the Killing Techniques Palace was sufficient to display the unfathomable depths of a Regional Academy.

Currently, there was only a fatty on the platform. He was lying there, creating thunderous snores. He was actually sleeping.

A row of words were carved on the ground right in front of him: The manual is carved on the platform, don't disturb my sleep. Wait for another mentor if you wish to challenge.

When Rota saw the sleeping fatty on the platform, she could not help but break out laughing. "I thought all Conferred Knights would be hard at work with their cultivation and could not help but wish that every minute they have is doubled. To think that there are also Conferred Knights who would laze around!"

Fang Xingjian frowned and said, "Maybe it's some kind of martial technique that one has to cultivate in his dreams?"

Fang Xingjian shook his head. He was not very sure about all these, but that did not stop him from learning the sword technique that was carved onto the ground. This sword technique was known as the Mountain Shifting Sword.

This was a powerful sword technique which could control geomagnetism and geographical positions, using the powers from the continental crust to move mountains and seas, to change the terrain, and even to form earthquakes and tsunamis.

While Fang Xingjian was reading the manual for the Mountain Shifting Sword, the two students from the previous stage had already rushed over. They ran up next to the fatty and said, “Brother Ronan, Brother Ronan, wake up! Brother Duolun has been defeated!”

They repeated it many times before the fatty who seemed to be a mountain of flesh opened his eyes with great impatience. A hint of killing aura appeared through the gaps of his eyes as he angrily berated, “So what if he lost? With his lousy sword arts, it’s not strange for him to have lost.”

“But the other party had only started learning the sword technique an hour before! In just one hour, his Thunderbolt Sword Technique reached level 10 and he defeated Brother Duolun!”

The fatty by the name of Ronan laughed out loud, his eyes filled with contempt and sarcasm. “What rubbish are you talking about? To reach level 10 in the Thunderbolt Sword Technique within an hour? You think that learning sword techniques is as simple as eating or drinking?”

How could Ronan believe this? He had not even heard of anyone reaching level 10 in the Thunderbolt Sword Technique, let alone being able to do it within an hour. There was no way he could believe this.

This was how it was. Any Knight or Conferred Knight in the Miracle World who had a hint of rationality would never believe it unless they saw it for themselves.

It was because something like this had not happened in their entire history!

However, he still woke up and threw a sideward glance at Fang Xingjian before asking, “You’re the one who defeated Duolun?” He assessed Fang Xingjian, thinking to himself, ‘To think that Duolun isn’t able to even deal with this young lad? That guy has really degenerated.’

Chapter 282 Disbelief

Seeing that Ronan still did not believe their words, the two students became even more anxious and shouted, “He is Fang Xingjian, this year’s Regional Champion and the genius who has comprehended all seven levels of the mysteries to the Pantheon Monument.”

“He really did reach level 10 in the Thunderbolt Sword Technique within an hour.”

Looking at their serious expressions, Ronan frowned. However, he still found it unbelievable.

This was as if someone had told a high school teacher that a student had completed all the papers for the college entrance examinations within ten minutes and had even gotten full marks for all of them. Who would believe this?

Ronan, who was like a mountain of flesh, shook his head and said, “Even if he has comprehended the seven levels of mysteries to the Pantheon Monument, does that mean that he can reach level 10 in his Thunderbolt Sword Technique within an hour? Even Divine level experts have not accomplished such a feat before. Two hundred years ago, the Melancholic Monarch left the Pantheon Monument behind. Have you guys heard of him bringing a Killing technique to level 10 within an hour?”

The two students were struck speechless and simply could not respond.

That’s true. This was something that even Divine level experts could not accomplish... and yet Fang Xingjian could do it?

The two students was immediately in doubt.

Looking at their hesitation, Ronan smiled and revealed a proud expression as he said, “That’s why I’m saying that bringing the Thunderbolt Sword Technique to level 10 within an hour is

impossible. I reckon that..." Stroking his double chin, he continued saying, "This fellow must have picked up the Thunderbolt Sword Technique earlier and brought it to level 10, before going over to act as if he had just picked it up."

"It's not just level 10. Based on what Brother Duolun said, it's at level 12."

"And what meaning is there for him to do this?"

"Meaning?" Fatty Ronan sneered. He thought that he had understood the whole situation, so his tone was now even more confident. "What could it be? It's to put up the farce of being a genius, of course. How many 'geniuses' have you come across who, since they were young, liked to pretend they were slackers, only to work hard through the night in secret? Fang Xingjian is just another guy who likes putting up a facade."

As he said his, Ronan looked toward the direction where Fang Xingjian and Rota were, and intentionally spoke louder, "Remember, the path of a Conferred Knight's cultivation is very tough. If you don't go through your cultivation one step at a time but choose to waste your time putting on an act and pretending to be talented, you're just treating your future as a joke."

The two students nodded, and the gazes they sent in Fang Xingjian's directions became clouded with contempt.

Rota could no longer tolerate it and rebutted, "What nonsense are you spouting? Moreover, Fang Xingjian just participated in the Regional Selection a month ago and only completed his job transition this month. Where would he have had the time to pick up the Thunderbolt Sword Technique in advance?"

Hearing Rota's words, Ronan was rendered speechless. He then said impatiently, "Why would I care how he cheated? At this level, he can only pick up the Mountain Shifting Sword dutifully. I'm not as weak as Duolun, and I'll definitely not go easy on him."

Ronan's rank was 34th, and he was a level 23 Conferred Knight. His Mountain Shifting Sword had also reached the maximum level of level 15, and his mastery of sword arts was above Duolun's.

However, no matter how much they said, Fang Xingjian did not pay any heed to their conversation. It was merely some gibberish. How could acting impetuously be more important than for him to pick up sword techniques? In a while, he would naturally speak with his sword technique.

Moreover, this Mountain Shifting Sword seemed more powerful and complicated than the Thunderbolt Sword Technique from the previous stage.

It was just as the two students had said. The four sword techniques in the four stages of the Killing Techniques Palace were ranked in order of difficulty.

The previous Thunderbolt Sword Technique was one which summoned the ether particles in space, transforming the powers drawn from them into electrical forces to use in attacks.

Additionally, the Mountain Shifting Sword was different. It used the power of the sword to guide the geographical positions, changing geomagnetism and the powers of the earth to guide the movements of the continental crusts. This in turn changed the terrain and created earthquakes.

How tremendous and violent was the force harbored by the earth? Once the various heat and kinetic energies exploded, it would be sufficient to destroy an entire city.

Furthermore, how complicated would the sword theories about the Mountain Shifting Sword be, for it to control and stimulate such powers?

Upon his first look, Fang Xingjian was almost instantly attracted by the ingenuity of the theories behind the Mountain Shifting Sword.

He went over each and every word with great detail. It was fortunate the requirements of the Regional Academy were splendid enough that there were many generations of experts who had written down a large number of annotations. All of the annotations were what generations of experts had understood and left behind. Naturally, all those who had been able to leave their words behind were not ordinary.

Fang Xingjian had even seen Hoppes' comprehension of the Mountain Shifting Sword. Hoppes had broken down some difficult parts and explained each part, making it more convenient for others to pick up the technique.

Even though Fang Xingjian was going over the words one by one, to the people present, the speed at which he was reading was still much, much too fast. It was unlike ordinary Conferred Knights who needed to spend half a day carefully studying each line of the Mountain Shifting Sword they had read.

For Fang Xingjian, it was like he had read one line, paused for a while, and then after comprehending the profoundness of that line, he would immediately move on to the next one.

When Ronan saw the speed at which Fang Xingjian was reading, he could not help but let out a cold snort, "Putting up a farce."

After reading closely for about over forty minutes, Fang Xingjian shook his head slightly and stopped looking at the manual.

The two students suddenly felt nervous upon seeing this scene. It was because this scene seemed to already have happened when Fang Xingjian learned the Thunderbolt Sword Technique. They looked at Fang Xingjian and thought to themselves, 'Has he learned it again? This time, he's even faster than before?'

Ronan frowned. Meanwhile, Rota asked directly, "Xingjian, have you learned it?"

"Learned it?" Fang Xingjian shook his head. "How is that

possible? This sword technique is still quite complicated. How would it be possible for me to pick it up in such a short amount of time?”

“Then you...”

“I’m going to have my meal.” Fang Xingjian looked toward Ronan and said, “Do you guys have to go out for your food? Is there no one who will deliver food here?”

Of course, there was a food delivery service. However, seeing how Fang Xingjian had the mood for food whilst learning the sword technique, everyone was speechless.

“Putting up a farce.” Ronan let out a cold laugh while shaking his head. His disbelief that Fang Xingjian had picked up the Thunderbolt Sword Technique within an hour was increasing. He then said to the two students, “You guys can take him out to get food. I’m going to sleep.”

With that, Ronan dropped down on the ground, facing upward. Soon after, snoring sounds emerged.

Fang Xingjian could care less about all these. He would have no other choice if he was in the wilderness, but since he was in the Regional Academy, he naturally had to ensure he ate every two hours. This would ensure that his various energies, essences, and nutrients were replenished.

Only with sufficient energy, would he be able to ensure that his body was capable of self-cultivating for twenty-four hours a day at all times, not wasting any single second of his time.

Helplessly, the two students had no choice but to bring him to the dining hall in the Killing Techniques Palace.

The Killing Techniques Palace welcomed all Conferred Knights to train there, and the cultivation of Conferred Knights could take days or even months. So, it was, of course, impossible for them to have to head out for their meals each time. The dining halls would

prepare required the meals.

After Fang Xingjian finished his food, he returned to read the Mountain Shifting Sword again. Finally, after one and a half hour, he drew out the Demoness' Howl.

Chapter 283 Malicious Intent

Seeing that Fang Xingjian had drawn out his longsword, the two students looked over once again. Rota was also staring at him with interest, as if waiting for something to happen.

‘The Thunderbolt Sword Technique from the first stage controls thunder and lightning.

‘The Mountain Shifting Sword in the second stage, on the other hand, is for changing the geomagnetism.

‘Electromagnetism and geomagnetism... both of them complement each other.

‘The people in Miracle World do not have natural science like on Earth. However, considering their outstanding martial arts and abilities, as well as their complementation with things like the Heaven’s Perception and ether particles, the comprehension ability of some experts of the natural world may not lose out to the best scientists on Earth.’

As Fang Xingjian contemplated the profoundness of the Mountain Shifting Sword, the Demoness’ Howl in Fang Xingjian’s hand started to dance about, as if it was a ladle mixing up a pot of porridge. The entire space seemed tremble slightly.

Everything in the world was formed by ether particles. This was the case for mountains and rivers, and this was also the case for the human body.

The Mountain Shifting Sword was a sword technique which passed through two sides, both formed by ether particles, and let the two fields affect each other. Then along the natural course of development, the sword technique would move around mountains and seas.

For ordinary people, such disturbances and changes formed from the interactions of physical substances were transformations to

one's aura.

Therefore, what that was important in the Mountain Shifting Sword was not the ingenuity of the sword move but rather, in one's aura. One needed to display an imposing sword aura to guide and move the terrain!

With a slash of his sword, the aura throughout Fang Xingjian's body changed. Then as he slashed out time and time again, the aura in his body continued increasing, as if he had turned into a majestic mountain, standing tall before everyone else.

Although his movements were slow, his power and aura grew increasingly stronger. Even though the others were tens of meters away from him, they were able to sense that each movement of Fang Xingjian's longsword caused disturbances in the air, like they were the disturbances in the seas. They hit against the ground and released tremendous booms.

Then as Fang Xingjian's aura grew stronger, the valleys and cliff walls in the surroundings seemed to tremble slightly. This was the Mountain Shifting Sword, changing the geographical landscaping slowly.

Fatty Ronan, who had previously been deep in sleep, suddenly opened his eyes. He shot out a vicious glare as he watched Fang Xingjian perform the Mountain Shifting Sword.

‘He really has succeeded in picking it up?’

‘But how is that possible? Could it be that somebody broke the rules and taught it to him outside?’

‘Who would be so audacious?’

A series of doubts went through Ronan's mind. Regardless, he was unable to believe that Fang Xingjian had almost succeeded in learning the Mountain Shifting Sword within about one and a half hour. Back then, when he had been trying to pick up this sword technique, how much time had he taken? Had it been half a month

or one month?

Ronan was not able to believe that someone would be able to pick it up within one and a half hour.

He shouted at Fang Xingjian, “Have you managed to learn the Mountain Shifting Sword?”

Fang Xingjian threw him a glance and said, “This sword technique is truly complicated and profound. I had to spend some additional effort to be able to say that I’ve really managed to learn it.”

Hearing this, Ronan felt unhappy, especially after seeing how tall and young Fang Xingjian was. A burning jealousy bloomed in Ronan’s heart.

Ronan said in a loud voice, “Fang Xingjian, there hasn’t been anyone in the world who has been able to pick up the Mountain Shifting Sword in such a short amount of time. Rather than believing in the possibility of this happening, I’m more inclined to suspect that there has been a Conferred Knight who leaked out the information about the Mountain Shifting Sword and committed the crime of treason.”

Although he appeared as if he was on the side of justice, the words he spoke were extremely vicious. If Fang Xingjian was really related to the crime of treason, being involved with someone, who had spread information about the Mountain Shifting Sword without authorization, would ruin his future.

The Empire clamped down hard on things like spreading around the Empire’s martial arts without authorization. Even if it was done by a Conferred Knight, the person would be punished with death.

Therefore, when Fang Xingjian heard Ronan’s words, he frowned deeply with hints of fury spread throughout his body.

He did not know if Ronan’s words were intentional or not, but if

such rumors were to spread out... Even if Fang Xingjian was deemed innocent in the end, he would have been dealt a heavy blow. In that instant, a killing aura surged out from his body, and he did not plan to step back.

Of course, at this moment, Fang Xingjian must not step back. Instead, he must strike back hard to defend himself. Otherwise, he might be thrown into a quagmire, bugged down by countless investigations and troubles.

Especially as Fang Xingjian's talent continued to reveal itself, the information about how quickly he picked up sword techniques would be known by more and more people. Therefore, he needed to harden his stance in such matters. He could not afford to have anyone slandering his talent, especially when it involved things like spreading around the Mountain Shifting Sword without authorization.

Therefore, Fang Xingjian glared at Ronan coldly and said, "This is just how my sword arts talent is.

"The things that Divine level experts can't do... and the things that mediocre people like you can't do... It doesn't mean that they are things I can't do."

Hearing Fang Xingjian's words, Ronan was extremely infuriated, and there was nothing that he dared not do now. The fats on his face trembled, and he pointed his thick index finger at Fang Xingjian, saying, "What an arrogant junior. Today, I'll put you down and hand you to the association for them to conduct a thorough investigation."

Ronan was openly declaring war, starting his attack without giving Fang Xingjian a chance to train.

As he spoke, his body trembled slightly and his disposition changed immediately. Although Ronan still appeared very fat, he did not give off the feeling that he was actually so. On the contrary, he gave off an aura of vigor, heroism, loftiness, and great zeal.

The bones in his body trembled vigorously, knocking against each other, while his vital energy and blood gushed crazily, as if they were part of a gushing river. Then as his aura rose, the entire valley was filled with tremendous sounds of rumbles and kachas. The sounds were extremely terrifying, giving off the feeling as though the entire heavens and the earth were being torn apart by a giant.

When Rota and the two students felt the tremors coming from under their feet, they were stricken with panic.

This was the level 15 Mountain Shifting Sword. Just the initial kickstart would cause the terrain to move, the mountains to collide, and the earth's crust to tremor. It was like the earth was quaking and the mountains swaying.

Ronan was not even holding a sword at all. He had merely put his fingers together to form a sword, and as his sword fingers first began moving, the walls of the mountains had started to tremor furiously.

Looking at panic-stricken expressions of Rota and the others, Ronan appeared to be very proud of himself. However, when he saw Fang Xingjian's calm demeanour, he began to feel infuriated again.

On his fat face, his eyes squinted, looking like a pair of small dots. He glared viciously at Fang Xingjian and said coldly, "The Mountain Shifting Sword emphasizes on the aura and not the moves. What's the difference if there's a sword or not?

"Today, I'll teach you how profound the Mountain Shifting Sword truly is."

With a swing of his sword fingers, he slashed out toward Fang Xingjian across the space. Concurrently, the huge sword underneath his feet trembled vigorously, and a wave of tremors was sent out.

Chapter 284 Fight

The powers of the earth were extremely strong. There was no need to think too much to be able to realize this.

The earth's tectonic plates pressed against each other, forming mountains and seas. Just imagine, how much power would be needed to push out and create Mount Everest and the Alps?

And just how terrifying were powers that could create tsunamis and city-destroying earthquakes?

These were all the powers from the earth's rotation. These extremely immense powers spread out through earth in tremors. They did not have the terrifying special effects which explosions, lightning and fireballs had, but just the simple tremors held the power to destroy everything.

Just like how it was for Ronan now. As his sword's aura increased, the electromagnetism contained by the ground burst forth explosively, spreading out toward the ground below Fang Xingjian together with the vigorous tremors.

Do not look down on the prowess of such tremors. They were like the tremors in the ground before the explosion of an earthquake. Minor ones could tear down and destroy buildings, while major ones would be able to tear through the ground and create valleys. These were all things that such tremors were capable of doing.

When this surge of power hit Fang Xingjian's body, it was directly blocked, absorbed, and neutralized by the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor on the surface of Fang Xingjian's skin.

If it were merely a spar like with Duolun earlier, Fang Xingjian would still play around with Ronan with his sword techniques in order to cultivate it. But faced with the current situation, he wanted to use the most brutal and powerful side of himself to crush the opponent.

As he sensed the tremors easily being stopped by the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor, Fang Xingjian threw a cold glance toward Ronan and said, "That's it?"

Ronan let out a loud bellow and pointed out repeatedly with his sword fingers, causing a huge quake through the ground. It was as if the entire mountain range was moving. The moment streams of tremors exploded out toward Fang Xingjian, countless rock spikes on the cliffs were thrown out by the immense force, and they shot toward Fang Xingjian.

Rumble! Countless rock pillars and spikes collided fiercely and pushed together before turning into dust and exploding under the impact of countless tremors.

An attack that seemed so simple actually had such a powerful force that it compressed the air and made the space around the huge sword platform into a vacuum.

After a series of attacks, Fang Xingjian was nowhere to be seen.

Activating his Boundaries Negation, Fang Xingjian took a light step forward and appeared behind Ronan.

However, Ronan was after all a Conferred Knight. Even Fang Xingjian who had activated his Boundaries Negation was unable to easily land an attack on him like how he had crushed Knights at ten times supersonic speed.

Ronan let out a huge bellow and then flicked his sword fingers upward. The ground below him was torn apart and countless rock swords were pushed forth. Under the impact of a force comparable of a volcanic eruption, they created streams of air currents and shot out like missiles.

However, faced with the attack, Fang Xingjian was like an evil god from hell. He allowed the rock swords that were moving at five to six times supersonic speed to pierce into him before instantly turning them into dust with vigorous trembles. He also allowed

the tremors under the ground to spread out toward him and they were eventually neutralized by the armor.

The level 29 Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor was simply too powerful. Even if Fang Xingjian were to stand there, not moving an inch, Ronan would still have to go all out to break through his defence. Moreover, how could Fang Xingjian simply just stand there, not moving?

He walked toward Ronan, throwing out karate chops and relying on the sword force transformed from his sword bones as well as the tenacity of the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor, he easily crushed the various rock spikes, pillars and swords.

Ronan looked at this scene in disbelief and bellowed out in his heart, 'How is this possible? The explosive force from my Mountain Shifting Sword and the tremors and rock pillars produced by the colliding force of the earth are sufficient to turn an entire street into ruins. I'm even able to crush muscles of steel. How could he block them just like that?

'Could it be that his body is formed from Divine Weapons?'

Ronan retreated crazily, only to see that Fang Xingjian took a few consecutive steps forward and broke through his attacks with karate chops. He just continued to move toward Ronan as if he was an unrivalled god of battle.

Looking at this scene, the murderous gleam in Ronan's heart grew even stronger than before, throwing up his aura to great heights once again.

Concurrently, his level 15 Mountain Shifting Sword was unleashed at full prowess together with this exploding force. The entire valley was shaken up, as if a volcano had erupted underground.

All the movements, tremors, and pushing force in the ground were gathering toward Fang Xingjian under Ronan's guidance.

There even seemed to be kacha kacha sounds in the air, as if the entire space had been frozen. Wherever the tremors passed by, the earth seemed to be pressed together into powder, causing dust and sand to fly up.

What was even more terrifying was that the valleys in the surroundings became like a big mouth that was closing. The explosiveness of the electromagnetic force deep underground pushed all the mountains, cliffs and rocks, clamping down together toward Fang Xingjian. The valleys were starting to close up together.

They were like giants, crushing toward Fang Xingjian with extremely violent and brutal forces.

This attack with its full prowess unleashed from the level 15 Mountain Shifting Sword was sufficient to flip mountains and rivers over, changing the terrain, and could be said to have created a distortion in the world.

Rota and the other two students looked at this scene in horror. The pressing impact from the tremendous force and the collisions from the mountains left them with nowhere to escape to. They could only watch as the valleys closed in together and the mountains started to press in toward them.

“Senior! Please stop!”

“Ronan, are you crazy?!”

However, how could Ronan stop here? Moreover, the full explosive impact that he had thrown out was not something which he could stop easily.

But at this moment, the Demoness’ Howl in Fang Xingjian’s hand was raised high up. Everyone only felt their bodies suddenly turning very light, and amidst the dizziness, everything turned black and the skies seemed to be collapsing down onto them.

The ‘Terra Ingurgitation’ absorbed all the gravity within a radius

of a kilometer. With the help of gravity, all the mountains and rocks eagerly flew up into the sky.

Terra Ingurgitation was truly the bane of the Mountain Shifting Sword. Having lost the gravitational restrictions, the balance of the powers in the ground was broken and Ronan lost control over his Mountain Shifting Sword.

At the same time, Fang Xingjian pushed his longsword downward. Before it even closed in on him, the huge sword platform under Ronan's feet had already broken into pieces. Everything before him turned black and there were buzzing sounds next to his ears. His sight, hearing, and even touch, were all completely robbed from him through that brutal sword attack.

“Ahhh!”

Ronan felt that his life was being threatened. Accompanied with a loud whistle, the fat all over his body started to fade away and weaken at a speed that could be seen by the naked eye.

He had activated a secret Killing technique he had been cultivating. It stored a large amount of energy in the body as fats. At the most critical moment, it would be able to burn up the fat and release an explosive power that could increase his battle prowess by several times.

However, it was still not enough. Faced with Fang Xingjian's 'Terra Ingurgitation', Ronan only felt that no matter how much power he attacked with, it would not be enough. As he burned up all the fat, his feet sunk into the platform and he seemed to have merged into one with the ground.

“I'll fight it out with you!”

Then, in the next moment, his sword fingers were thrown out toward the Demoness' Howl.

Chapter 285 Bearing the Weight

Other than power, there was still one more characteristic the earth had: it endured the weight of everything in the world.

The world nurtured all lives and endured their weight. Regardless of if there were volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis, or various other natural disasters, the earth quietly accept them all.

Even if a nuclear bomb were to explode or if it were the attack of a Divine level expert at full power... to the earth, they were all nothing.

Erudite, profound, vast... These were other characteristics the earth had. This was also the greatest level of profoundness behind the Mountain Shifting Sword. As the saying went, one had 'to be calm, enduring, and unmoving like the earth'.

Under added levels of increasingly violent power, at the very end, what the Mountain Shifting Sword possessed was the most powerful defence.

After Ronan unleashed his full powers, his entire body had produced a mysterious connection with the valley, forming exchanges between their qualities and between the ether particles.

Upon mastering the greatest heights of the level 15 Mountain Shifting Sword, Ronan's body was connected together with the valleys.

Ronan might not be able to truly be as vast and profound as the earth, but he could channel most of the attacks received by his body onto the mountain valleys, letting them withstand the impacts of Fang Xingjian's Terra Ingurgitation.

'If you were to use the power of all the valleys to crush me, I'll use the power from all the valleys to defend against you!'

At this moment, their sword techniques, their mental spirits, and

their auras clashed against each other, forming a mysterious cycle.

Finally, Ronan's fingers touched the tip of Fang Xingjian's sword, and the entire world seemed to quiet down at this moment. The clouds in the sky stopped drifting, and the suspended mountains and rivers, as well as the wind, all grew silent.

Rota and the two students opened their mouths wide, trying to stabilize themselves.

In the next moment, violent air currents shot out from Ronan's fingertips and the tip of Fang Xingjian's sword. Several ten thousand kilograms of sand and dust were thrown up into the air explosively, covering the two figures.

An unbelievable amount of force was thrown onto Ronan, which he then channelled into the valleys. The earth, which had been about to suspend earlier, now seemed to be slapped down brutally by a formless palm, creating massive cracks and explosions which reached far out into the land.

The mountains exploded and cliffs crumbled, turning into countless huge rocks, sand, and dust falling down; this was an avalanche.

The earth had been torn apart, the valleys pressed together, and the entire stretch of valleys began to crumble; this were earth fissures.

The collision of their attacks had caused the avalanches and fissures so bad that the entire stretch of valleys could no longer take the impact and began to crumble.

In this situation, Ronan could neither see nor hear anything. His entire body was trembling vigorously, each of his bones and muscles letting out a cry as if they had reached their limits. At this moment, Ronan only felt that the entire world was very far away from him.

When he regained his senses, his entire body was aching and

numb. He felt terrible, like his bones and muscles had all been torn apart.

Huge boulders weighing a thousand jin pushed down on him. In order to push away all the rocks, he had to throw out a huge force, and after he climbed out, he coughed up a big mouthful of blood.

Now, Ronan no longer had the image of a Conferred Knight. His clothes had turned into rags, and his head and face were all covered in dust. He looked like a miner who had just left the coal mine.

Especially after unleashing an explosive force from his vital energy and blood which burned his fats, he was now no longer a fatty but an emaciated man. His cheeks had sunken in, and he appeared as thin as a bamboo pole, like he would fall with the slightest wind.

This fight with Fang Xingjian had caused him have his appearance changed from that of a Conferred Knight to that of a refugee.

Having just crawled out, Ronan's limbs were all weak. His reception of the ether particles was messed up. Additionally, his Heaven's Perception was like a television which had lost its connection. There was nothing but illegible characters flashing before him.

This was happening because a large amount of his physical strength and energy had been depleted, causing him to feel faint. Naturally, he was not able to keep his Heaven's Perception activated either.

However, when he lifted his head, he saw Fang Xingjian standing there, not covered in a hint of dust. Fang Xingjian was just standing there as if nothing had happened.

The Demoness' Howl in Fang Xingjian's hand was already starting to shatter, but he was not concerned about it in the least.

Throwing out force to the side with his palm, the Mountain Shifting Sword was activated.

The earth continued to be pressed together, and just like squeezing out a pimple, it pushed out a rock spike and sent it into his hand.

Fang Xingjian casually picked up the longsword formed by the rock spike. With his Swordless Path specialty activated, Fang Xingjian now had another level 19 Inferior Divine Weapon in his hand.

He stroked the sword, looked at Ronan calmly and asked, “To be able to survive despite receiving an attack by my Terra Ingurgitation... Your Mountain Shifting Sword has truly reached a high level. In terms of both strength and resistance, it’s extremely powerful.

“However, I still have my Boundaries Negation and can battle at ten times that of supersonic speed. Now that we’ve competed in terms of power, do you want to have another go at competing with our speed?”

Ronan opened his mouth, as if he wanted to be unyielding and reply to Fang Xingjian. However, he looked at Fang Xingjian, who appeared extremely calm and was still spotlessly clean. He then looked at the entire stretch of valleys to see that there was nothing left.

Or rather than saying there was nothing left, it could be said that the fight between Ronan and Fang Xingjian had caused the entire stretch of valleys to collapse. This collapse then transformed the stretch of valleys into a large crater filled with shattered rocks and soil.

Seeing how Ronan seemed like he wanted to talk but no words were coming out of his mouth, Fang Xingjian shook his head and released his grip. The rock spike fell from his hand and shattered into countless small stones, scattering away in the wind.

“You’ve lost your guts, and your determination is gone. Even if you were to use the Mountain Shifting Sword now, you won’t be able to display even 30% of its profoundness. There’s no point in me attacking anymore.

“But you must remember the lesson you’ve learnt today. You can eat whatever you want, but you can’t say whatever’s on your mind. The next time I find you that you’ve slandered me, I’ll kill you with my sword.”

With that, Fang Xingjian turned and departed, leaving behind a cool back view for Ronan to see.

Which Conferred Knight would be able to accept being stomped upon and taught a lesson? Reality was not a novel. There was no such thing as having a scenario where friendship blossomed from a fight or where a person would be full of admiration and seek guidance humbly after being defeated.

After being defeated, the normal thing was for the person to put in even more effort in their training, hold their anger in, and desire to take the win back at a later time.

‘Fang Xingjian, you better not fall into my hands!’ Ronan glared at Fang Xingjian for a while before he also turned to leave, limping as he headed out of the hall.

Fang Xingjian walked to Rota and asked, “Are you alright?”

Rota and the other two students were covered in dust. Although the three of them were not the targets of the attacks, just the repercussions from the attacks had already been hard for them to deal with. If they had not reacted quickly... and if it had not been for the fact that the two students were Conferred Knights who had even tried to help Rota a little bit, Rota would have sustained heavy injuries.

As Fang Xingjian walked over, the two students retreated unconsciously, as if some ferocious beast had charged over.

Rota shook her head and looked at Fang Xingjian with a strange gaze. “This is the move you learned from the Pantheon Monument? It’s called Terra Ingurgitation? It’s really amazing.”

This was the third time she had seen Fang Xingjian performed the Terra Ingurgitation. However, no matter how many times she had seen it, she still felt extremely exhilarated.

“This kind of force exertion, this brutality... This move must be the extreme limits of great power.”

However, Fang Xingjian shook his head and said, “This is just the tip of the iceberg. Come, let’s go to check out the next stage.”

Chapter 286 Heavenly Waterfall

Fang Xingjian got the two students to lead the way. After all, the entire stretch of valleys had been destroyed, and the cliffs and rocky paths had all disappeared. So, Fang Xingjian and Rota naturally did not know which direction to go.

Fang Xingjian might have previously had the plan to take a break first or even to return to the Killing Techniques Palace and clear all the stages within two to three days. However, Ronan suspected that Fang Xingjian had picked up the Killing techniques in the Killing Techniques Palace in advance. Although Fang Xingjian wanted to shut Ronan up with his sword, what he wanted to do more was to break through the Killing Techniques Palace within the shortest time possible. This would be able to prove that his talent really had allowed him to pick up a set of top notch Killing techniques within one to two hours.

The group of four proceeded forth, passing by many buildings and through many gardens. Not long later, they heard rumbling sounds.

“Is this the sound of water?” Rota’s brows twitched and asked, “Is there a great river in the Killing Techniques Palace?”

The two students nodded with some hesitation, as if they had just thought of something. A hint of fear and the desire to hide flashed in their eyes.

They continued to walk for about a few hundreds meters, and the rumbling sounds got increasingly louder, to the extent that it was deafening. It was as though there was a great river and even a waterfall in the distance.

The four of them turned past a corner, and an endless vapor gushed forth toward them like a spray of rain. Then in the next moment, a huge lake appeared before them.

The lake was an emerald green, just like jade. It was huge, but what was even more amazing was that many one-meter-tall waves hit against the shore like waves from a sea. The entire lake seemed like it was breathing.

The rumbling noises they had heard earlier came from the center of the lake. It was as if a heavenly pillar or a pillar of water had fell from the heaven, smashing down on the lake.

The volume of the water pillar was massive, and it looked just like a waterfall, smashing down incessantly onto the surface of the water while creating rumbling sounds.

It was also because of this that a stream of water continued to smash downward with thunderous rumbles, causing vapor to fill the air.

Rota looked at the sky in amazement and asked, “Why is there a waterfall falling down from the sky?”

One of the students explained, “This is the Aquatic Sword Formation the second generation Headmaster created. It compacts the water vapor which falls from the skies and forms a heavenly waterfall that adds water into the lake endlessly.

“There is an eyelet right at the bottom of the lake’s center, where water from the lake will flow through it continuously into the underground river. The lake will then continue to be filled up by the water vapor in the air.

“This causes the lakes to be full of huge surging waves, undercurrents, and whirlpools. Even if a Conferred Knight were to enter the water, he will have to be extremely careful at all times as he may be drawn down to the bottom of the lake.

“This is the third stage of the Killing Techniques Palace, the Heavenly Waterfall Lake, where you’ll learn the Aquatic Sword Formation.”

As Rota looked at the majestic Heavenly Waterfall Lake, which

was like a divine miracle, her mind was completely refreshed. The scene had an indescribable grandeur to it. Even if ordinary people had seen it, they would also feel as if all the troubles in their hearts were resolved. If one were to stay here for a long period of time, they would become open-minded and be capable of handling things with great generosity.

Of course, the prerequisite was that the individual would need to be able to withstand the omnipresent vapor and humidity, as well as those deafening sounds.

Fang Xingjian asked, “Where do I go to learn the Aquatic Sword Formation?”

One of the students looked at the raging water in the lake with a lingering fear and pointed to a large stone tablet in a distance away. Then he said, “It’s on that stone tablet.”

Therefore, Rota and the others went over. What they saw there were densely packed words as well as various diagrams and annotations. This was the Aquatic Sword Formation which students had to learn for this stage.

Just as Fang Xingjian was reading the manual for the Aquatic Sword Formation, the surface of the lake suddenly became turbulent. A figure broke through from the water and landed heavily on the shore.

The figure was a lady who was completely drenched, had her hair tied up high, and was wearing a swimsuit.

The lady had long, black hair, and the curves of her muscles and bones were very distinct. Additionally, with her malt colored skin, she gave off a feeling of great vigor.

However, the moment she landed on the shore, she coughed up a mouthful of water and then looked at the direction of the lake with a weakly pale face.

Not long after she landed, the entire lake was like it was boiling.

A huge whirlpool suddenly appeared and spread out, revealing a dark hole, which seemed as though it was connected to hell.

Then a more mature-looking lady rose from the whirlpool, with a layer of waves surrounding her body. She wore a Knight attire, yet she did not appear to be wet at all.

As she emerged, a hint of fury flashed across her face. She stared at the girl on the shores and said, “What are you so scared of? The most important part of cultivating the Aquatic Sword Formation is to enter the Heavenly Waterfall Lake and train up your sword formation through the lake’s undercurrents and water flow.

“This Heavenly Waterfall was created back then by the second generation Headmaster. The water flow contains the profoundness of the Aquatic Sword Formation. As a cultivator, you must be able to press forward with an indomitable will; you must push through all obstacles, and slash out a path from the sword formation. Only then will you be able to pick this up successfully.

“You became careful the moment you entered the water, on guard against anything and everything. Without any determination to push forth, how are you going to cultivate the Aquatic Sword Formation like this?

“Hmph. When I was first learning the Aquatic Sword Formation, I tied a metal chain to myself and leaped into the center of the lake. The worst that could have happened was for me to be drowning and having to get people to pull me out. Without even this courage, how are you going to pick this up?”

When Rota and the others heard this, their hearts skipped a beat. This lady was truly vicious. To think that she had tied a metal chain to herself and just leaped down toward the eyelet in the middle of the lake. It was as though, before cultivation, one’s life was totally unimportant. Her actions and disposition, as well as the fury reflected on her face all showed that this lady was a ruthless person.

After reprimanding the other lady on the shore, the mature-looking lady then turned to look down toward Fang Xingjian and the others. When she saw the two students, she frowned and said, “Aren’t the two of you cultivating the Thunderbolt Sword Technique with Duolun in the first stage? Why have you come here?”

“It’s not allowed for people to walk around casually through the four stages in the Killing Techniques Palace. You two are seniors and should know this. Why are you barging in here today?”

Being stared down by this lady, the two students became like mice who had encountered rats. One of them straightened up smartly and said, “Miss Ada, we’re here to show the Fang Xingjian the way. He won the previous two stages but isn’t familiar with the way to the third stage, so we brought him here.”

“Fang Xingjian?” The mature-looking lady by the name of Ada shifted her gaze to Fang Xingjian and asked, “You’re this year’s Regional Champion, Fang Xingjian?”

Ada was a female swordsman and a level 24 Conferred Knight ranked 25th amongst the students.

When Ada saw Fang Xingjian nod, she questioned doubtfully, “Shouldn’t you have only entered the school last month? Yet you’ve already defeated Duolun and Ronan?”

Her tone was filled with doubt and disbelief.

The two students answered, “It’s true. Furthermore, Fang Xingjian only came to the Killing Techniques Palace today, but he has already learned both the Thunderbolt Sword Technique and the Mountain Shifting Sword.”

There continued to be doubt in Ada’s eyes. She looked at Fang Xingjian and asked again, “I heard that the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor is in your hands. Is that true?”

If the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor was really in his

hands, then it would explain how he had managed to get through to this stage.

Chapter 287 Number Five

Fang Xingjian was not interested in denying it and admitted directly, “That’s right. I’m wearing the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor right now. Why? Do you want me to take it off when I challenge you later?”

Ada eyes lit up, and she asked curiously, “Oh? Such an important armor, a level 29 Superior Divine Armor... You’re willing to put it aside and fight against me?”

“Of course, I’m not willing,” Fang Xingjian said outright. “I’m not an idiot who would cast my treasure aside while I battle against someone. If I lose the armor, people would only say that I’m foolish. No one would compensate me with another one.”

“Hmph, at least you’re clear about that.” A hint of light seemed to flashed in Ada’s eyes, as if many thoughts were going through her mind. In the end, she could not help but say, “Fang Xingjian, your armor is really useful to me. Are you willing to lend it to me?”

Ada was currently at level 24 and her ether synchronization rate had already reached 59%. As she neared an ether synchronization rate of 60%, she was also trying to attain level 25.

Every 10% of the ether synchronization rate was a barrier, and each breakthrough would be a tough battle to fight. This was why it was called the Ten Heavenly Barriers. It required the Conferred Knights to have extremely strong willpower and strong minds.

Additionally, the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor contained the consciousness left behind by the level 29 expert, Domirov. If Ada could use this residual consciousness to train up her willpower and spirit, she would be able to increase her chances of attaining a breakthrough.

However, how could an important treasure like the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor be loaned out to others so easily? If the

borrower was not willing to return it in the end, Fang Xingjian would not be able to do anything about it.

Therefore, he shook his head and said, “It’s such a rare treasure, so how can I lend it out easily? Moreover, we’re not that close with each other. It’s just impossible for me to lend the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor to you.”

“Don’t be in a rush to reject me.” Ada tried to persuade him, “I’m only going to use the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor to train up my martial will in order to prepare myself for the purpose of breaking through to a 60% ether synchronization rate. I’ll definitely return it to you after.

“And don’t you want to know what I’m going to offer in exchange for you lending me the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor?”

Fang Xingjian was truly curious about this, so he continued to listen attentively.

Ada said, “Your biggest crisis right now should be coming from the First Prince, right? Based on what I know, in order to complete the mastery of the thirty-six Hell’s Maps and replicate the scene which has not appeared for hundreds of years, the First Prince has already staked everything he has on this. So, he no longer has any qualms.

“Moreover, his talent is really something that’s hard to come by even through the generations of royalty. He has also obtained a set of Divine level remains from the Church of Universal Truth, allowing him to absorb the information of a Divine level expert at every single moment. It can be said that within a year, he will be able to attain the Divine level.

“And once he attains the Divine level, even the Second Prince will not be able to protect you. Furthermore, in order to cultivate the thirty-six Hell’s Maps, the First Prince will definitely pull you in.

“You may not really understand about the cultivation of the Hell’s Maps yet. Let me tell you, once you sign on the Devil’s Note, you won’t be able to decide on your life or death. Each thought and action you have will be controlled by the First Prince, and you’ll completely become his puppet. You’ll be living a life that’s worse than death.

“Therefore, the reason you’re in such a hurry to cultivate and show off your talent is because you hope that you’ll be able to go against the First Prince, right?”

Ada had pointed out the facts clearly. To her, Fang Xingjian’s greatest problem now was the First Prince. She believed that Fang Xingjian was only cultivating so furiously because he was facing the crushing pressure from the First Prince, to the extent that he was doing something like breaking through two stages of the Killing Techniques Palace within a day.

Fang Xingjian gave no answer but merely said, “Even the Second Prince isn’t able to go against the First Prince, but you have a way to?”

Ada broke out into a mysterious smile and said, “His Majesty has five princes. The First and the Second Princes aren’t the only ones.

“The First Prince is truly outstanding, but when it boils down to it, it’s only because he has received the most resources which comes with the status of being the eldest son.

“The Second Prince is very influential, and there are many people supporting his revolution. But it’s only because he was born earlier.

“Hmph, what you people do not know is that amongst the five princes, the one who’s truly amazing is the Fifth Prince. His talent is unrivalled.

“In terms of his talent in bare-fisted arts, there has been no one

in history who was stronger, and there will not be any in the future who will be able to surpass him. In time, he will definitely become the strongest person in the world.”

Fang Xingjian did not care about talent. Moreover, no matter how talented a person was, the person’s talent would not surpass his. So, he merely asked, “You’re saying that if I were to hand you the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor, you’ll be able to convince the Fifth Prince to protect me?”

“Of course not. If you wish to convince the Fifth Prince, you must take the initiative to offer up the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor.” As if she had sensed Fang Xingjian’s lack of interest, Ada let out a cold laugh and said, “Fang Xingjian, I know that geniuses like you are all proud and arrogant creatures. You think that you’ll be able to rely on your miserable talent to push your way through and attain the Divine level, and stand at the very top of the world.

“But if you’ve met the Fifth Prince before, you’ll be able to understand that your miserable talent, when put before his, is as different as a fire torch is from the sun. You’ll probably never be able to imagine how talented he is.

“It’s just like how the cicadas in the summer will never be able to image what the icy snow is like.”

Ada’s tone was slightly arrogant and she said, brimming with confidence, “I can introduce you to the Fifth Prince. When you’ve met him, you’ll naturally be willing to lend me the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor.”

Fang Xingjian was neither interested in crazy fans like her, nor did he care about the Fifth Prince whom she was holding in high esteem. He merely turned to read the manual for the Aquatic Sword Formation.

Since he had broken through two stages consecutively, he decided to take this seriously and completely break through all the stages in the Killing Techniques Palace within a day.

Therefore, as Fang Xingjian continued to read the Aquatic Sword Formation, he once again entered a state of full concentration.

Ada let out a cold laugh, thinking of the words ‘not knowing what’s good for you’, and continued to guide the students under her.

Rota was slightly puzzled and asked, “The Fifth Prince? Why is it I remember that since he was young, the Fifth Prince has never liked fighting and killing and was always learning to draw and write. Amongst the five princes, isn’t he the only one who didn’t take up martial arts?”

One of the students next to her nodded and said, “It was like that in the past. However, I heard that the Fifth Prince came across an assassin a few years ago. Taking a lesson from the painful experience, he decided to put in great effort into picking up martial arts. I don’t know if it’s true or not.”

On the side, Fang Xingjian had already completely sunk into the reading of the Aquatic Sword Formation.

This was another extremely interesting sword technique. Through exchanging energies with ether particles, one could condense the vapour in the air, turning them into Aquatic Sword Qis, and then position the Aquatic Sword Qis in a large expanse of space to form the Aquatic Sword Formation. One would then be able to condense the water vapor in a large area and then control the sword formation through the Aquatic Sword Qis, producing a tremendous destructive prowess and defense.

The most amazing part of the Aquatic Sword Qis was that as long as one was able to form sufficient Aquatic Sword Qis, the amount of water vapor one could condense and control would be limitless.

Of course, while the sword formation was limitless, humans faced limits. Despite this, it was said that back then, the Great Western Region’s second generation Headmaster had once performed the Aquatic Sword Formation in the Northern Ice

Region, condensing the water vapor and turning the area within a hundred li into a large lake.

Chapter 288 Sword Formation

When Ada saw that Fang Xingjian was reading the stone tablet seriously as if everything appeared to be clear and logical, she criticized him secretly in her heart while she trained the other students.

Like Rota, another female Knight, Ada had also been born into an aristocratic clan and had received the best education and cultivation resources. Furthermore, her talent was outstanding and she was willing to put in hard work for her cultivation. This was how she had been able to become the level 24 Conferred Knight she was now.

Despite this, Ada was already 38 years old this year.

She had gotten married at 28, but unfortunately, when she was 30, her husband had failed in his attempt to attain the Heavenly Barrier of 30% ether synchronization rate and had entered a comatose state.

This was the worst possible scenario. When a person became a vegetable, it meant they were not really dead. So, in order to maintain their reputation, the clans of both parties had not allowed her to get a divorce, and she was made to live a life as a widow.

Living a life of self-pity, Ada had turned all her energy onto her cultivation. However, her mood had still grown increasingly bad and her temper had become increasingly violent. She would blow her top at the smallest thing, and she became the old hag to whom everyone in the academy would turn a deaf ear.

‘Harsh and stern with a bad temper’ became the impression that everyone had of her.

This had lasted until two years ago, when she had met the Fifth Prince while she had been out in the wild, hunting ferocious

beasts.

Additionally, this encounter had made her fall completely for the Fifth Prince's demeanour, passion, talent, and abilities. In her eyes, there was no other man in the world who would be able to compare to the Fifth Prince.

Thinking of the Fifth Prince, a smile appeared on Ada's face unknowingly, and the gaze she threw at Fang Xingjian grew icier than before.

'Hmph, the Fifth Prince studied the Aquatic Sword Formation by linking the bare-fisted martial arts theories to sword theories. Then after he observed the Heavenly Waterfall Lake, he imparted the 'Heavenly Waterfall Slash' to me..

'Even if you're wearing the level 29 Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor, there's no way you can fend off this move created by the Fifth Prince. I'll use this move to defeat you and let you understand that no matter how strong you are, there's always someone out there who is stronger than you.'

Fang Xingjian had his meal, then he started his cultivation. About one and a half hours later, he stretched out his five fingers, and it was as if he could sense a gush of water vapor surging toward him. In the blink of an eye, countless water droplets continued to gather incessantly on his palms, forming a longsword made from water.

Rota smiled and asked, "You've managed to pick up the Aquatic Sword Formation?"

Fang Xingjian shook his head and said, "This is only the Aquatic Sword Qis. I must be able to create twelve Aquatic Sword Qis before I can start to form the sword formation."

Amidst the gazes of two students, Rota, Ada and the other lady, Fang Xingjian started to form streams and streams of Aquatic Sword Qis. Each time one stream was created, he would toss it into

the air. Then in the blink of an eye, another twelve streams of Aquatic Sword Qis had appeared.

Once the twelve streams of sword Qis appeared, a mysterious connection was formed between them. Fang Xingjian seemed to have become the control station of a freight station, incessantly exchanging information and energy through the ether particles and the twelve streams of sword Qis.

A confident smile appeared at the corners of Fang Xingjian's lips. With a light tap of his sword fingers, the twelve streams of sword Qis circled around his body, swaying about freely as if they were floating batteries [1].

Laughing out loud, he then randomly took up an Aquatic Sword Qi and started to perform a sword dance.

The water sword in his hand swung freely, while the remaining eleven streams of sword Qis moved about unhindered and slashed through the air, creating loud tearing sounds.

Fang Xingjian tapped his longsword across space and shot out eleven streams of sword Qis consecutively, lifting up several ten thousand jin of golden sand at the shore.

Even Rota and the others could sense that the Aquatic Sword Qis were being moved at high speed. Together with the powerful slashing prowess they held, even if they encountered rocks and sediments, they would slash through them. The sword Qis were extremely sharp and were like high speed water blades.

Wherever the Aquatic Sword Qis passed by, the area would be covered with a strong drying sensation. It was because the Aquatic Sword Qis absorb water vapor incessantly in order to replenish the energy depleted by the slashing.

The moment this Aquatic Sword Formation took shape, all twelve sword Qis, including the one in Fang Xingjian's hand, constantly absorbed the world's water vapor. They also

complemented each other, maintaining a connection at all times and facilitating their energy depletion and replenishment.

Additionally, the formed Aquatic Sword Qis circled around Fang Xingjian as though they controlled by Fang Xingjian's hands, hitting wherever Fang Xingjian pointed to.

As the sword Qis moved about freely, a loud whistle rang out in the air, and more and more water vapor continued to gather in Fang Xingjian's direction. Many more sword Qis were formed in succession, and the large amount of water vapor gathered there made it seem as though a heavy rain was falling down onto the Heavenly Waterfall Lake.

As the large amount of water vapor gathered together, it turned into water droplets, which then eventually surged into Fang Xingjian's palm, allowing him to create one Aquatic Sword Qi after another.

At level 1, the Aquatic Sword Formation could create 12 Aquatic Sword Qis. It would continue to progress, and at level 5, the user would be able to create 121 Aquatic Sword Qis. Then at level 10, the user would be able to create 277 Aquatic Sword Qis.

Currently, Fang Xingjian had already gathered 49 Aquatic Sword Qis. At level 4, the Aquatic Sword Formation could already allow him better control over the Aquatic Sword Qis.

The sword Qi in his hand swept forward, while the remaining 48 Aquatic Sword Qis were sent out in all directions like exploding fireworks, gradually filling up the area within a 100-meter radius around Fang Xingjian.

Fang Xingjian nodded and said, "I've finally made some progress." He then turned to 'look' at Ada, saying, "I'd like to have your guidance in the Aquatic Sword Formation."

Ada was standing in the middle of the Heavenly Waterfall Lake. Although the Heavenly Waterfall was plunging down, they seemed

to be torn apart by formless sharp blade above her head. The waterfall split into two, unable touch her at all.

Hearing Fang Xingjian's words, Ada smiled and said coldly, "You want me to give you guidance when your Aquatic Sword Formation is only at level 4? You should talk after you've entered the Heavenly Waterfall Lake."

Fang Xingjian smiled faintly and walked over, step by step, in the direction of the Heavenly Waterfall Lake. The other 48 streams of Aquatic Sword Qis around him were like floating batteries circling around him. At a glance, they looked just like countless satellites.

The circulation of this sword formation could serve the purposes of both attack and defense, allowing the user to attack or defend from any direction.

As Fang Xingjian walked slowly into the Heavenly Waterfall Lake, gradually submerging his entire body into the water, the Aquatic Sword Qis also entered the lake. The Aquatic Sword Qis were originally formed from water vapor. So, now that they had entered the lake, they were like fish in water, with an increased agility of over ten times.

However, simultaneously, Fang Xingjian also sensed that the undercurrents and waves in the lake were like aquatic shock waves knocking against his body.

The power of the water was very strong. The undercurrents in the sea could knock a person unconscious and pull them into the depths of the water, or kill them directly from the impact.

The power of a tsunami could drown a city entirely, killing several ten of thousands or even hundreds of thousands of people.

This Heavenly Waterfall Lake had been created by the second generation Headmaster, and the various undercurrents and waves in the lake would circulate based on the ingenuity of the Aquatic Sword Formation. The omnipresent impacts were like boundless

sword waves, smacking Fang Xingjian.

Looking at how Fang Xingjian was thrown around by the currents, the corners of Ada's lips curled up as she broke into a smile which was full of contempt.

However, while Fang Xingjian was being hit by the waves, he continued to sense the circulations of the Aquatic Sword Formation in the water. He had intentionally allowed himself to be hit since he had the level 29 Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor. His aim was to allow his body to directly appreciate the profoundness of the sword formation.

[1] A floating battery is a kind of armed watercraft, often improvised or experimental, which carries a heavy armament but has few other qualities as a warship.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Floating_battery

Chapter 289 Comprehension

Fang Xingjian relaxed his entire body while the impacts formed from the water currents around him continued to hit his body. Fang Xingjian continued to appreciate the feeling of the sword impacts hitting against his body, trying to understand the profoundness behind the Aquatic Sword Formation.

The next moment, with an abrupt tremble, he formed sword fingers with his hands and all of the Aquatic Sword Qis which had entered the lake started to rage at the same time. Like multiple water dragons, they continued to swim about and to collide against the impact waves that were attacking Fang Xingjian, with both the impact waves and the Aquatic Sword Qis cancelling each other out.

Fang Xingjian was controlling his Aquatic Sword Formation to go against the Heavenly Waterfall Lake's Aquatic Sword Formation.

However, the entire Heavenly Waterfall Lake was like a world-sized millstone. The whirlpool at the bottom of the lake, together with the Heavenly Waterfall which was plunging down from the sky, seemed to want to crush everything in the lake into smithereens.

This was equivalent to using the natural powers of the world to attack the opponent. On the other hand, Fang Xingjian was controlling his Aquatic Sword Formation, relying on his own powers to go against the powers of the world.

Streams of water impacts continued to be wiped out while the Aquatic Sword Qis he created were also continuously being destroyed. In the blink of an eye, more and more impact waves hit against him, bursting into sprays.

The Aquatic Sword Formation Fang Xingjian was controlling started to crumble, but at the same time, it continued to go against the powers of the entire Heavenly Waterfall Lake. As he continued to sense and comprehend the profoundness of the entire sword

formation, Fang Xingjian's understanding of the Aquatic Sword Formation also continued to increase.

In the image constructed in his mind, the impact waves formed by the water in the lake were very clear. The traces where they passed by appeared in his mind with glimmering lights. Countless traces continued to stack together, changing, surging, and forming the shape of the entire formation.

Just like that, Fang Xingjian suddenly started to inch toward the center of the lake. The entire Heavenly Waterfall Lake was formed by the Heavenly Waterfall Lake and the underground whirlpool. The closer he was to the center, the greater the impact of the formation. The speed of the water current in the center even seemed to have exceeded several meters per second. These powerful currents collided against each other, swirling around and slashing about. Even if steel were to fall in, it would instantly be torn to dust.

And the closer Fang Xingjian moved toward the center of the lake, the stronger the pressure he felt was.

In the center of the lake, there was no hint of water droplets within a five meter radius of Ada. It was as if an air bubble had surrounded her, and the currents that flowed near her seemed to have immediately become as tame as a kitten.

Behind her, the female Knight who was wearing a swimsuit said in astonishment, "How amazing. To think that he's able to comprehend the ingenuity of the sword formation within such a short amount of time. This guy's talent is so scary. He might really be able to charge into the center of the Heavenly Waterfall Lake."

Ada shook her head and said, "Hmph, is the Heavenly Waterfall Lake so easily broken through? The closer you get to the center of the lake, the greater the pressure faced. How can one rely on one's own powers to go against the tremendous powers of the heaven and earth?

“He doesn’t know the ingenuity of how the Aquatic Sword Formation borrows strength to fight against strength. He probably won’t even be able to get within one hundred meters of the center of the lake.”

However, just as Ada said this, the sword force in Fang Xingjian’s hands changed once again. Streams of impact waves collided against his Aquatic Sword Qis. Not only were they not able to weaken the Aquatic Sword Qis, they were gradually neutralized or even absorbed by the Aquatic Sword Qis.

The speed of the Aquatic Sword Qis instantly increased to become two times as fast as before. They started to withstand the impact waves coming from the surroundings, accelerating toward the center of the lake.

“What?!” Ada looked at this scene in great astonishment. Back then, as she entered the lake time and time again, she had to risk her life and cultivate before she started to get used to the attacks from the water in the lake. Even so, she still took half a year.

And Fang Xingjian had merely taken over ten minutes to start getting used to the attacks from the sword formation? What kind of a joke was this?

It was a pity that Fang Xingjian was not trying to joke. Right now, in his mind, countless spots of light were flashing and countless trails were circulating. All of them were the changes to the sword formation and its flaws. He looked at the circulation of the sword formation as he continued to control the Aquatic Sword Qis to swim about, absorbing and diverting the power from the impacts.

The Aquatic Sword Qis, rather than attacking, was actually a sword technique which was better for defence. As countless Aquatic Sword Qis circulated, they were able to gradually cushion and absorb the impacts from any attack.

Fang Xingjian continued to absorb the attacks from the entire

Heavenly Waterfall Lake as he dashed toward the center of the lake.

As she watched Fang Xingjian getting closer to her, Ada's countenance had turned solemn and extremely grim.

She was also once a female Knight who had a dream, a future, and great hopes. However, as so many years passed, she started to be hit by reality, especially after she had came across the Fifth Prince, a genius amongst geniuses. It made her understand even more clearly that there were some people in this world whose talent was simply so unreasonable. Even if ordinary people were to spend ten or a hundred times more time, they might not even be a match for when the geniuses put in just a slight attempt.

Although she was astonished by Fang Xingjian's talent, she was even more confident in the Fifth Prince.

‘His Highness is the guy who is going to become the strongest in the world. How can his great power and amazingness be something that you can even start to imagine?’

‘Although Fang Xingjian is truly amazing, he's merely someone who appears once in a hundred years. At the most, he'll become someone at the level of Governor Devitt or someone like one of the ten Divine level experts in the Empire.

‘However, the Fifth Prince is one who will stand above the Mage Kings, the Pope, and the founding king of the Empire. He will become an existence which is able to change the history of the world.’

Just as she thought about this, Ada's gaze appeared extremely confident. She put her hands together and white vapor started forming in her hands, forming a stream of Aquatic Sword Qi in an instant.

The next moment, in the entire Heavenly Waterfall Lake, up to a thousand Aquatic Sword Qis appeared. It was as if all the water in

the Heavenly Waterfall Lake had been compacted together in that instant.

How long has Ada been training in the Heavenly Waterfall Lake? She would condense the sword Qis in the lake everyday, and her understanding of the Heavenly Waterfall Lake was second to none. When she performed the Aquatic Sword Formation, she seemed to have almost encompassed the entire Heavenly Waterfall Lake.

It was also because of this act that Ada's control of the Heavenly Waterfall Lake managed to reach a new extreme. On the other hand, Fang Xingjian felt that the water around him seemed to have suddenly turned into cement, causing each of his changes of action and sword stance to become a hundred times more difficult than before.

However, this was merely a warm-up for Ada. She had not planned on going easy on Fang Xingjian either. She had just created the Aquatic Sword Formation but was already pushing forth the sword Qis, activating the powerful Killing technique—the Heavenly Waterfall Slash—which the Fifth Prince had specially created for her, taking into consideration of the location.

A tremendous boom rang out!

Amidst everyone's astonished gaze, the Heavenly Waterfall which was plunging down seemed to have frozen for a short moment.

At the next moment, the entire Heavenly Waterfall seemed to have condensed into an Aquatic Sword Qi, bringing along a tremendous impact and piercing toward Fang Xingjian...

Chapter 290 Armor

The Heavenly Waterfall was plunging down from the sky as if it had gathered all the rainfall intended for an entire city and was now pouring it all at once. How terrifying was the impact?

Such a tremendous amount of water was almost able to create a huge explosion on the surface, then forming a tsunami a few meters tall, and causing the water flow to gush out at a speed of several thousand meters per hour, smashing everything in its path. It was more horrifying than ordinary aerial explosions, both qualitatively and density-wise.

Sensing the longsword the Heavenly Waterfall formed piercing toward him, Fang Xingjian's expression turned very grim.

When facing such an attack, even if he could slash through it with Terra Ingurgitation, the Heavenly Waterfall was almost never-ending. Even if he were to slash through one section, he would drown at once under waves and waves of water.

And his Terra Ingurgitation could only be used once an hour.

Therefore, without any hesitation, through his Heaven's Perception, Fang Xingjian threw his consciousness into the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor.

He needed power. He needed the tremendous power contained within this set of level 29 armor.

Almost at the same time when he activated the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor, waves of powerful aura surged into the skies. The entire Heavenly Waterfall seemed to have started heating up. Of course, this was only an illusion. However, the remnants of the consciousness of a level 29 expert, even just the subconscious willpower impact, gave one the feeling that the entire world was changing.

At the same time, the entire set of Heavenly Abyss Annihilation

Armor started to appear on Fang Xingjian's skin. The armor, which looked as if dragon scales were encompassing his body, was moving together with the changes of the strength of his muscles. The streams of light reflected by its scaly surface appeared to be just flames.

A faint white glow grew from Fang Xingjian's limbs and other parts of his body, forming many geometrical figures.

The various geometrical shapes appeared behind Fang Xingjian's body. Accelerating force field, physical force field, autocalibration force field, high temperature resistant force field... The numerous force fields appeared one by one with the awakening of the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor, once again increasing Fang Xingjian's damaging prowess.

Inside the void space, countless energy surged into Fang Xingjian's body. He could feel that his body was growing all at once, as if air was being pumped into it. His strength was growing maniacally, increasing fold by fold, as if explosives were being set off in his body.

Roar!

He sensed the furiously growing strength in his body, like a kettle with boiling water. Fang Xingjian opened his mouth to let out a long bellow, and under the impact of his sword bones, the currents he howled out looked like a stream of a hundred-meter-long sword Qi, slashing through the air, slashing the Heavenly Waterfall in two right in front of him.

If Ada's attack toward Fang Xingjian through her control over the Heavenly Waterfall could be said to have an impact capable of tilting over and stirring the entire Milky Way, then Fang Xingjian's howl was capable of pushing back the Milky Way, splitting it in two.

This was the most blatant display of violence that the level 29 Superior Divine Armor, the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor,

had shown to the world ever since it was born.

‘It’s not over!’

How could Ada give up just like that? She put her hands tightly together in formation, making the Heavenly Waterfall split into two, act like two slithering snakes, and with a tremendous impact she once again dashed at Fang Xingjian from his left and right.

The atmosphere was shaking, the earth was trembling, the entire Heavenly Waterfall Lake was as if it was boiling up, water surging out as if it was hordes of troops and horses that would tear everything they come across into dust.

However, having activated his Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor, Fang Xingjian was not afraid of the incoming attack. He punched outward, causing a stream of the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor to flow backward, and amidst a series of explosions, Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!, sections of air and water exploded together, pushed up into the air by the sword force.

With a stomp, the faint white force field under Fang Xingjian’s feet disappeared. He then charged like a rocket.

The world seemed to stretch at that moment, the air torn apart to reveal a void passageway. Before the void space was once again filled up by the air in the surroundings, Fang Xingjian launched another punch.

Astonishing sword Qis which were several hundred meters long each shot out, and amidst the tearing sounds which resounded several thousand meters away, the Heavenly Waterfall plunging down from the air was gradually being pushed back.

Fang Xingjian continued the cycle of launching punches with each few steps he took, the scale armor around his body still trembling and whining with sharp whistles. The endless force from the void space surged forth to replenish the energy Fang Xingjian had depleted, strengthening his bones, muscles, vital

energy, and blood. With each punch he launched, the white flow formed by ether particles force fields would increase their speed and force, amplifying Fang Xingjian's strength.

Streams and streams of sword Qi continued to tear apart the air, pushing back the Heavenly Waterfall and making it impossible for it to plunge downward. Instead, more and more of the water was gathering in the air.

At that moment, Fang Xingjian finally arrived in the center of the lake.

Ada looked at Fang Xingjian and smiled coldly, thinking to herself, 'So what if you're able to temporarily stop the Heavenly Waterfall? The water from the lake will continue to gather in the air. The more you try to push it back, the greater a strength it will amass. And as time passes, the accumulated power will be increasingly stronger. I don't believe that you can continue to hang on like this.'

'This guy must be thinking of attacking me. Hmph, I'll wait and see how you break through the sword formation of more than a thousand Aquatic Sword Qis.'

As she thought of these, the thousand of Aquatic Sword Qis spread out across the lake were activated. Countless jets of water flew over and encompassed the area, turning her into a big sphere of water with a diameter of over fifty meters. No matter what kind of attack was sent out at her, the sphere would be able to instantly absorb and neutralize the impact.

The impact resistance of water was clear to all. Even if an impact of a few thousand tons were to hit against the surface of the sea, it would only create a large splash.

Encompassed by a water sphere with a diameter of fifty meters, how strong did the attack have to be in order to reach Ada?

However, just as Ada was thinking of this, Fang Xingjian

suddenly turned and shot out toward the surface of the lake.

‘What is he thinking of doing?’

As Ada continued to contemplate, Fang Xingjian clenched his fists tightly and raised them above his head. His body suddenly swelled up, and he sent out violent gushes of power in all directions, and making a series of explosions in the air.

The next moment, Fang Xingjian seemed to be like a plunging shooting star, his fists fiercely hammering down.

With a series of rumbling explosions, the moment Fang Xingjian’s fists came into contact with the surface of the lake, a terrifying surge of force exploded, charging toward the Heavenly Waterfall Lake with immense force. Rota and the others only felt huge tremors under their feet and found it hard to remain standing.

And with Fang Xingjian’s punch, the entire Heavenly Waterfall Lake was thrown up into the air.

The force of this punch sent all the water from the lake into the skies. How brutal and violent was this strength?

Having activated the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor, Fang Xingjian had truly raised the meaning of the word ‘violent’ to a whole new level.

Looking at this scene, Ada gasped, unable to believe her eyes. At the same time, she sensed that the thousand Aquatic Sword Qis she had gone through a lot of work to amass had all been turned into dust. She had lost control over the entire Heavenly Waterfall Lake.

However, at the same time, the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor Fang Xingjian was wearing started to fade off. He had used the armor to its limits and if he were to continue, Domirov’s consciousness which was lying in the armor would hurt him.

Ada let out a strong exhale. The pressure Fang Xingjian had put on her while wearing the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor was

much, much too great. Now, looking on as the Heavenly Abyss Annihilation Armor disappeared, she seemed to be able to relax.

However, she was unable to savor this moment for long. Fang Xingjian put his fingers together to form a sword, and with a slight wave, made Ada open her eyes wide, as if she had just seen a ghost.

Chapter 291 Picking Up

As Fang Xingjian's sword fingers moved about, the Heavenly Waterfall, which was plunging down from the sky, actually changed its direction.

‘Impossible!

‘How can this be possible?!

‘The Heavenly Waterfall was left behind by the second generation Headmaster. Even the Aquatic Sword Formation is not able to control it.

‘If it's not because the Fifth Prince created the Heavenly Waterfall Slash based on the flow of the Heavenly Waterfall Lake and the principles behind the Aquatic Sword Formation, even I won't be able to control the Heavenly Waterfall. How on earth did Fang Xingjian do it?’

Many thoughts began flooding Ada's mind at a very fast speed, but they were unable to stop the plunging Heavenly Waterfall, which cut across the sky and fell down toward Ada's direction.

Before the Heavenly Waterfall even got near, strong gales gushed forth, making it hard for Ada to breath. The water vapour in the air arrived before the waterfall itself, and it was as if there was a heavy rainstorm.

Behind Ada, that female student in a swimsuit was already pale-faced and screaming out loud. With her abilities, there was no way she could fend off the impact from the Heavenly Waterfall, and she would probably be crushed into pieces.

Ada let out a fierce bellow and condensed streams of Aquatic Sword Qis, incessantly absorbing the water from the lake to encompass her body. She directed the Aquatic Sword Qis with sword fingers on one hand while pointing her other hand to the ground. Then Ada's aura suddenly changed, and it was as if she

had turned into a majestic mountain, standing there aloft.

As the guard for the third stage, Ada had naturally learned the Mountain Shifting Sword from the second stage. Suddenly, she performed the Mountain Shifting Sword and connected herself with the surrounding terrain, hoping to fend off the plunging Heavenly Waterfall.

In the next moment, it was as if the Milky Way had plunged down, and the Heavenly Waterfall collided against Ada's sword formation. However, just like how it was as easy as to break an egg, the water sphere was immediately crushed despite having the ability to stand up against a battleship's main canon. Thereafter, the waterfall then continued to hit against Ada's body mercilessly.

Feeling as if a mountain had smashed down against her body, Ada's bones let out a series of woeful creaks as she puked out a mouthful of blood. At the next moment, Ada was completely devoured by the water and had fallen to the bottom of the lake.

Simultaneously, the earth trembled like there was a grade 5 earthquake. It was the result of Ada channeling the impact she had received down into the earth through the Mountain Shifting Sword.

The Heavenly Waterfall went back to normal, and Fang Xingjian gradually returned to the shores. Rota and the others were all struck with fright.

Just then, a series of explosions abruptly appeared in the lake, and Ada dashed out while grabbing the female student. With a few steps, they landed on the shore.

The female student was still in a shock and completely drenched. Next to her, Ada was panting heavily with a pale face. There were many parts throughout her body including her organs which were suffering from internal bleeding, and even her spine was severely injured.

In fact, if it had not been because she had channeled away majority of the impact with the ingenuity of the Mountain Shifting Sword, her body would have been smashed to smithereens.

Despite this, Ada's injuries were still very serious. However, she persisted and lifted her head, then she looked at Fang Xingjian and mumbled, "You... How on earth did you manage to control the Heavenly Waterfall?"

"This is the Heavenly Waterfall created by the second generation Headmaster. Even the Aquatic Sword Formation can't control it. How did you do it?"

Fang Xingjian said calmly, "Didn't you manage to do it? I imitated you."

"Imitated me?" Ada's expression grew agitated. "That's the Heavenly Waterfall Slash, not the Aquatic Sword Formation. You haven't learned the Heavenly Waterfall Slash before, so how could you imitate me?"

"Didn't you use it right in front of me? I learned it after seeing you using it once."

"You learned it after watching me using it once?" Ada looked at Fang Xingjian in a daze, with doubt filling both her eyes. "How is that possible?"

Fang Xingjian said casually, "There's nothing impossible about it. It's just an application of the Aquatic Sword Qis. By tapping into the force of the rising hot water vapor and using the theory of sinking cold air, I caused the Heavenly Waterfall to break through its limits temporarily

"It's easy to understand with just one look."

These words made Ada's countenance change. She had not expected that Fang Xingjian would be able to bring up the principles behind the Heavenly Waterfall Slash so easily. The Fifth Prince had told her about the principles previously, but she had

spent a few days trying to comprehend them before she gradually understood the Heavenly Waterfall Slash.

To think that Fang Xingjian had learned it after seeing her use it just once?

In that instant, an immense feeling of frustration surged within Ada.

She suddenly thought of how even the Fifth Prince had meditated before the Heavenly Waterfall Lake for one day and one night before he created the Heavenly Waterfall Slash. However, Fang Xingjian had been able to pick it up with just one look.

Although the Fifth Prince trained in the area of bare-fisted arts, it was still much harder to create a technique than learn one after just looking at it. However, Ada's confidence in the Fifth Prince was still dealt with a blow.

The Fang Xingjian right before her seemed to overlap with her image of the Fifth Prince. Suddenly, Ada's confidence in the Fifth Prince was not comparable to what it had been before.

'I must tell the Fifth Prince. I'll send him a message right away. Fang Xingjian's talent is not to be undermined...'

However, Fang Xingjian merely asked, "I can head to the fourth stage now, right?"

Ada lifted her head and took a long look at Fang Xingjian. Then she said, "You don't need to rush. There's no one on guard for the fourth stage in the Killing Techniques Palace... After all, the purpose of defeating the people on guard for the first three stages is to allow the students to head to the next stage to learn the next sword technique.

"The fourth stage is the final stage. You can leave directly after learning the sword technique. There's no need at all for you to defeat a guard."

Hearing Ada's words, everyone was struck by realization and

turned to look at Fang Xingjian.

This meant that Fang Xingjian was considered to have broken through all four stages of the Killing Techniques Palace.

The students, who had followed Fang Xingjian from the first stage, murmured, “Clearing the Killing Techniques Palace within a day... Has something like this occurred before in the history of the academy?”

“No. No one has done something like this before. Fang Xingjian has made history...”

“We’ve all just become witnesses to the making of history.”

Ada took a few deep breaths before leaving with the female student to have their injuries treated. Meanwhile Fang Xingjian and the others headed to the next stage for Fang Xingjian to learn the final sword technique in the Killing Techniques Palace.

Simultaneously at the entrance of the Killing Techniques Palace, another group of people walked over. It was Hoult. Dressed in the clothes and accessories of nobility, he looked suave and handsome. As someone who was under the wings of a Divine level expert, Hoult was the one who had unfortunately come in second place in the Regional Selection after being defeated by Fang Xingjian.

Next to Hoult, there was a guy with big, intelligent eyes and a thin figure.

The guy looked at Hoult and smiled, saying, “Hoult, this time around, you’ll definitely be able to create a new record in the Killing Techniques Palace. You were able to step into Heaven’s Perception and complete the second transition within a month... There hasn’t been anyone else in history who has done this.

“Even that Fang Xingjian who is in the same batch as you... I’ve heard that he’s still training day and night in the Sacred Land? I’ve also heard that he has even wasted time creating his own Nurturing sword technique.

“For us to create Nurturing sword techniques... It’s too much of a waste of effort.

“Today, you’re going to start breaking through the Killing Techniques Palace. With your talent, you’ll be able to clear through all four stages within half a month at most. By then, you’ll definitely be able to defeat that Fang Xingjian.”

Chapter 292 Proud

As a follower of the teachings of a Divine level expert, Hoult was doted up by the Divine level expert to the extent of having the Snake of Engulfment created especially for him.

Moreover, with Hoult's talent being a rare occurrence of one in ten thousand, no matter where Hoult went, there would naturally be many people following or wanting to get close to him.

This was the case for the few people next to him. The quick-witted guy from earlier was called Norman, and he was the one who had followed Hoult the most closely, praising him into the skies.

Norman was ranked 41st in the academy, level 22, and training in the area of archery. However, he was already 39 years old and would be turning 40 next year.

This meant that he had reached the end of his martial arts path and basically would not be able to improve much further.

This was a problem faced by many Conferred Knights. At the Knight phase, they might have great progress in their cultivation. However, when they were at the Conferred Knight phase, they realized that their mental spirit and willpower were insufficient, and that their talent in comprehending ether particles was not good enough.

When people like these realized that they did not have talent, they would leave the academy when they reached a bottleneck. Just with their status as a Conferred Knight, they were usually able to land themselves in a good job with a respectable status after graduation.

However, Norman's ambitions were much greater. He could have graduated five years ago, but he had chosen to stay behind in order to meet even more Conferred Knights in order to prepare for life

after graduation.

For Norman, Hoult's appearance was like honey to a bear. No matter where Norman went in the world, being affiliated with a Divine level expert would bring him great benefits.

As a follower of the teachings of a Divine level expert, Hoult was also used to people like these. In fact, he enjoyed being surrounded by people like them.

Hearing Norman's words, Hoult smiled and said, "Thanks to the blessings of the Melancholic Monarch, I've managed to attain Heaven's Perception very quickly.

"Fang Xingjian is truly talented. If not for the fortuitous encounter at the Pantheon Monument, I would probably still need another half a year before I can surpass him.

"But Fang Xingjian should just have completed his second transition. I wonder when he'll be coming to the Killing Techniques Palace."

Norman was tactful in his bootlicking, "Haha, when that guy comes, he'll probably be just in time to watch you leave with his eyes wide open. Moreover, your job is the Astral Sword Saint. Amongst all the different second transition jobs, this should be considered the best."

"Astral Sword Saint... I heard that Hoult's grandmaster, the Astral Ancestor and one of the Divine level experts of this generation, had chosen the Astral Sword Saint as his second transition job back then."

The other students around Hoult also started their bootlicking. "With your talent in sword arts, you'll only take at most half a month to clear the Killing Techniques Palace."

"That's right, if you were to use the level 29 Crimson Fire, you'll probably be able to clear the stages within a few days."

Hoult shook his head and said, "I'm here to learn. It's

meaningless to rely on a Divine Weapon to clear the stages.”

As the few of them chatted, they entered the first hall of the Killing Techniques Palace.

However, it was impossible for anyone to be present to help provide guidance to the Thunderbolt Sword Technique. There was nothing but the charred ground, damaged walls, and a lonely huge sword in the middle of the hall.

“What’s wrong? Where’s the person on duty?”

“Is the timing right?”

“It should be. It hasn’t been long since the afternoon has started. Why are there no one instructors here?”

Norman frowned and looked at the damage done to the place before. Then he smiled and said to Hoult, “He has probably gone to have his meal or to the toilet. Let’s wait for a while.”

Hoult nodded. After all, he considered his talent to be unrivalled and thus did not need the guidance of any instructors. It did not matter if there was no one here. He merely walked up and started to read the Thunderbolt Sword Technique written on the huge sword.

The Thunderbolt Sword Technique was truly an interesting technique. As Hoult read it, he was drawn in.

Five minutes passed, then ten minutes, fifteen minutes... However, there was still no one.

Norman said impatiently, “What’s wrong with the Sword Arts Department? Why is there not even a soul to be seen? This is outrageous.”

Hoult smiled and said, “It’s fine. It’s good for me to read it by myself. This Thunderbolt Sword Technique is really profound, but I should be able to learn it within one or two days.”

“Amazing. I heard that the students from the Sword Arts

Department would all need to take one to two weeks before they pick up this sword technique.”

“As expected of the student under the wings of a Divine level expert. Hoult, you should be the most powerful person in this generation in the Myriad Star Palace, right?”

Hearing the flattery of the others, Hoult smiled and accepted their compliments.

Hoult was truly proud of his own talent. However, for some reason, he thought of Fang Xingjian.

This opponent who had defeated him on the Regional Selection was still a thorn in his heart.

Hoult still needed to work hard and could not slack off.

After clearing the Killing Techniques Palace and synthesizing the four sword techniques, he would find a chance to have another showdown with Fang Xingjian.

As they spoke, the sounds of many footsteps rang out. Hoult and the others turned to see a few middle-aged and elderly Conferred Knights walking over.

“Is that true? Isn’t this too unbelievable?”

“Even if you just look at the fact that he has cleared two stages in a row, he has already broken the records with that.”

“Since the founding of the Empire two hundred years ago, such a thing has been unheard of.”

Hoult and the others heard the faint sound of conversing voices coming toward them. When they saw the two old men who were leading the group, they froze up.

Standing before them was the pillar of the academy’s Sword Arts Department, Hoppes, who had led a sword arts team by himself. Next to him was a hunchbacked old man with wrinkles all over his face.

This old man was even older, but his status was also higher than Hoppes.

He was James, the Governor from two generations ago. James was the old man who had been guarding the Pantheon Monument previously and had seen Fang Xingjian break through all seven levels of mysteries to the Pantheon Monument.

When Hoult saw that James had brought Hoppes and a few other Conferred Knights into the hall, his expression turned solemn. He then asked, “Teachers, why have you come?”

“Lord James, you’re here too?”

James, the Governor from two generations ago, waved his hand and said, “I’m not guarding the Pantheon Monument anymore. However, Devitt, that lad, still insists that I do something. There’s no other way about it. Since I’m trained in swords, I’ve pushed Hoppes off, and I’m replacing him as the Head of Department of the Sword Arts Department.”

The Head of Department for the Sword Arts Department was naturally the person who managed the entire department in the academy.

This position was previously held by the sword arts expert, Hoppes, who had invented many sword arts Killing techniques and led the academy’s sword arts team.

However, with James’ identity, status, and experience, Hoppes could only give up his position. Moreover, he had primarily focused on researching sword arts and was not too interested in executive position.

Hoult smiled and said, “I’ve also just arrived here to learn the Thunderbolt Sword Technique.”

Norman added on tactfully, “Hoult has just completed the second transition yesterday. He attained Heaven’s Perception within a month and transitioned into his second transition job, Astral

Sword Saint.

“Hoult will probably be able to clear the Killing Techniques Palace within one to two months.”

The corners of Hoult’s lips curled up slightly, and there was a hint of pride on his face. Putting aside the fact that he had spent very little time and was very fast in accomplishing these, there had not been many people who had transitioned into the Astral Sword Saint. Moreover, his grandmaster, the Divine level expert and Astral Ancestor, had also been an Astral Sword Saint for his second transition.

Additionally, the fact the Astral Sword Saint controlled various powers, including astral powers, light rays, and tempest, must not be forgotten. It had powerful battle and destructive prowess.

Seeing as everyone was chiming in here and there, the Headmaster from two generations ago, James, nodded and said, “Not bad, not bad.” However, there was a hint of impatience reflected in his eyes.

Hoppes, on the other hand, was not as patient. He went straight to the point, “Alright, did you see where Fang Xingjian went?”

Chapter 293 Following

Fang Xingjian?

Hearing this name, the few people present were stunned for a moment before Norman smiled and asked, “Teacher Hoppes, you’re saying that Fang Xingjian came as well?”

“Why else would so many of us be here?” Hoppes waved his hand impatiently. He was a guy who was obsessed with sword arts to begin with, did not care about putting up appearances, and hated formalities. How could he have the patience to waste his time talking nonsense with these few youngsters?

And his abilities, status, and reputation, all allowed him to be so bullheaded.

After all, in Miracle World, only powerful Conferred Knights had the privilege to be bullheaded.

As he spoke, Hoppes had already pull James, the Headmaster from two generations ago, out, heading for the direction of the next stage.

Watching the crowd leaving without any hesitation, Norman smiled awkwardly toward Hoult, saying, “I never expected Fang Xingjian to be at the Killing Techniques Palace as well.”

Hoult nodded and said, “It’s fine. I had thought that I would be able to surpass him this time around since he hasn’t inherited a legacy and would probably require a lot of time to prepare for the second transition.

“To think that he has completed the second transition so quickly. Maybe he has transitioned into a more ordinary job.

“And even if he were to complete the job transition successfully and came to the Killing Techniques Palace, it shouldn’t be that much earlier than me. He might be at the second stage.”

Hoult was well aware of how fast he had attained the Heaven's Perception and completed the second transition. In order to catch up to and surpass Fang Xingjian, he had been going through his cultivation crazily day and night for the past month. He had even used quite a number of extremely precious resources in order for him to be able to complete everything successfully within such a short amount of time.

According to his calculations, this was already the limit. Therefore, Hoult believed that even if Fang Xingjian was faster than him, it would not be by much.

There was still a chance for him to catch up to Fang Xingjian in the Killing Techniques Palace.

However, earlier, James, the Headmaster from two generations ago and current Head of the Sword Arts Department, and Hoppes, the sword arts expert, had both appeared. The appearance of these two men caused an ominous premonition to grow in his heart.

However, he subconsciously ignored this feeling. Or rather, he was not willing to think too deeply into it.

The few people who were with him said, "Shall we follow after them to take a look?"

"That's right. Head of Department James and Teacher Hoppes are both here. Why don't we go check out what has happened?"

Norman took a glance at Hoult. He had been following Hoult for a month and had a bit of an understanding of his temper. He knew that Hoult came from a reputable faction but could be relatively delicate emotionally. Therefore, he said, "The two sirs both asked about Fang Xingjian earlier. Fang Xingjian might have created trouble again."

"That's right, I've long heard that Fang Xingjian tends to act recklessly without restraint and was extremely audacious. Could he have barged into the Killing Techniques Palace? Or could he

have injured someone?”

“He might not necessarily have hurt someone. This Fang Xingjian hasn’t even entered the academy for a month. For all we know, he could have been the one who has been injured.”

“That’s right,” Norman smiled and said. “He is after all, a Regional Champion, and has even resolved all of the mysteries behind the seven levels of the Pantheon Monument. If he were to be seriously hurt, it would be natural for Head of Department James and Teacher Hoppes to show such concern.”

After saying that, Norman secretly threw a glance in Hoult’s direction and noticed that the latter seemed to be in a much better mood now.

Therefore, he said, “How about let’s go and check it out as well?”

Hoult walked directly and said calmly, “Then let’s go take a look.”

Hoult and company followed behind James and the others. The two groups went on their way and arrived before a huge crater.

Looking at the tremendous crater before them, Head of Department James laughed and said, “Seems like he has cleared the second stage as well. Hoppes, do you remember how long you took to clear the second stage?”

The head of the sword arts team, Hoppes, was still checking out the situation of the valley with a solemn face, trying to assess the scene during the battle.

Hearing James’ question, Hoppes said, “Five days. I used five days before I learned the Mountain Shifting Sword and found the flaw of the instructor back then.”

“Hehe, Fang Xingjian probably only used one to two hours at most. The talent which can solve all the mysteries to the Pantheon Monument is truly amazing.” Head of Department James was still feeling an intolerable itch in his heart toward Fang Xingjian’s

talent and the profoundness behind the Pantheon Monument.

Hoppes, on the other hand, was still seriously assessing the situation of the valleys and said, “The one on duty today should be Ronan. His Mountain Shifting Sword is already at level 15 and he has grasped the sword attack which can bear the weight of the earth. He’s able to connect himself with the entire stretch of valleys. Judging on how things look, he did this as well.”

“However, Fang Xingjian was still able to break through it and even destroyed the entire valley.” Head of Department James smiled and said, “Fang Xingjian is such a bully. He must have used that sword attack he learned from the Pantheon Monument.”

“It’s not just that.” Hoppes squatted down to touch the sand on the ground and said, “He first used that move which absorbs gravity to disrupt Ronan’s balance. He then unleashed it with an explosive force while lifting up the earth, combining two swords into one and defeating Ronan.”

James shook his head and sighed, “It’s a pity, a pity... If only he had come a few years ago.”

Everyone present understood what Head of Department James meant and they nodded as well. It was true. If Fang Xingjian had come to the academy a few years earlier, it would be hard to imagine how far he would have progressed by now. He would even be able to participate in the National Selection next year.

However, there was now only one year until the National Selection. With it being such an important one, it was too much of a pity that Fang Xingjian would be unable to participate.

Shaking their heads, everyone then headed for the next stage together with James.

Behind them, Hoult and the others looked in astonishment at the huge crater before them. Someone who was also trained in sword arts and had gone through the Killing Techniques Palace before

looked at the scene before him and said, “This used to be a valley. Why has it been flattened?”

“What else could it be? Of course there must have been a battle.”

“Could it have been Fang Xingjian?”

Hoult’s expression suddenly plunged. If Fang Xingjian had cleared two stages in a row, even Hoult would not be confident of catching up to and surpassing him.

Norman laughed awkwardly and said, “Maybe there were some other seniors trying to clear the stage, and Fang Xingjian just happened to come by. Hahahaha...”

The others could only follow and laugh awkwardly, but none of them had taken it seriously. They were once again starting to reassess Fang Xingjian’s value to themselves.

In Hoult’s heart, a surge of resentment grew, and he thought to himself, slightly furious, ‘Is the talent between the fifth level of the Pantheon Monument and the seventh level of the Pantheon Monument really so great?

‘No matter how great the difference to our talent is, I must chase up to you.’

Thinking of this, Hoult did not say a single word but headed to the next stage. The people around him exchanged a glance and followed behind.

Although no one said anything, their curiosity as to which stage Fang Xingjian was now at surged. If they were to know that this was the first day Fang Xingjian had arrived at the Killing Techniques Palace, they would probably be even more curious.

However, even if they did not know about this, they subconsciously did not bring up the point of Hoult catching up with and surpassing Fang Xingjian. This made Hoult feel even unhappier.

Chapter 294 The Wait

The group advanced once again and, in the blink of an eye, appeared at the third stage's Heavenly Waterfall Lake. Looking at the plunging Heavenly Waterfall, everyone's faces revealed astonishment of varying degrees.

Hoppes sighed and said, "The work of the second generation Headmaster is still soul-stirring no matter how many times I see it. This Heavenly Waterfall Lake is really an uncanny work of great splendor."

Head of Department James laughed, "Hahahaha, there's no one again? To be clearing all the stages of the Killing Techniques Palace within a day... Hahahaha... Hoppes, has there ever been such a person in the history of the Great Western Region Regional Academy?"

"No." Hoppes shook his head and said, "Forget about the Great Western Region, there hasn't even been such a case across the Empire's eight regions. Fang Xingjian is the first."

James nodded in satisfaction and said, "Then he must be learning the Lightless Sword in the fourth stage. Let's not disturb him and just wait here."

With that, James took the lead and sat down on one side of the Heavenly Waterfall Lake, as if he was admiring the scenery.

All the other Conferred Knights looked at each other helplessly. One guy with a saber scar on his face frowned and said, "Sir, although Fang Xingjian has outstanding talent, I don't think it's good to let so many teachers and seniors wait for him here. It's bad influence for the others, and even he would probably be terrified."

In other words, he meant, 'Aren't you treating Fang Xingjian with too much reverence? We're giving him respect by waiting for him, but this is at the expense of our pride.'

It was a pity that Head of Department James did not care for his pride at all. What a joke. The only reason he had become the head of the Sword Arts Department was because he had taken a liking to Fang Xingjian's talent and wanted to persuade Fang Xingjian to share the Pantheon Monument's seven levels of mysteries with the Regional Academy.

What status did James have? He was the Headmaster from two generations ago, and, at his age, it was impossible for his martial arts to have much progress, and what he cared about was something beyond status. What he cared about was the academy's future, the Empire's future.

Looking at Fang Xingjian's astonishing performance once again, this student was now like a piece of extremely delicious meat to him. A thought appeared in James' mind, which was to protect and to escort Fang Xingjian.

Hearing the words of the guy with a scar, James' lips curled and he said, "If you were to clear the Killing Techniques Palace in a day, I'll wait for as long as you want me to."

The scarred face guy was put into a bad spot and could not help but retort, "You can't possibly rely on the rate of learning to determine that someone is better, right? There are so many seniors here. Which of them are not above him in terms of their level, abilities, ether synchronization rate, reputation and status?" He was bringing in other people to support his stand.

However, no one else joined in. Head of Department James let out a cold laugh and said, "We're all martial arts practitioners here. What are we competing in other than martial arts? Are we going to compare who is older? Who eats more?"

He sneered, "Why is there the National Selection? It's to see who the real talents are, and who's more superior.

"Let me ask you here. Were any of you here even half as amazing as Fang Xingjian is when you were at his age? He's a seventeen year

old genius, and there's still at least twenty to thirty years for him to be in his fast growth stage.

“When he's at your age, what level would he have reached?”

Regardless of who it was, the scarred face guy or other teachers, none of them had anything else to say. It was because the talent Fang Xingjian had shown now was that impervious to reason.

James, who had laid out everything, now nodded in satisfaction. Although Fang Xingjian's talent was amazing, in this world, not everyone would listen to you or help you just because your talent was great.

Back then, even the previous Pope whose battle prowess were unrivalled across the world was still unable to unify the whole world, nor could he get everyone to heed his words. So how could anyone else do it, even if the person had the world's best talent?

This was the reason why James had a strong urge to take care of this talent and to protect Fang Xingjian.

Another teacher pointed to Hoult and the others who were nearby and asked, “Should we get them to leave?”

James threw them a glance and said indifferently, “It doesn't matter.”

Hoult, Norman, and the others who had been following James and the others saw that they had stopped and thus also came to a stop a distance away.

A student asked curiously, “Why have they stopped here? What are they waiting for?”

Another student looked at the empty Heavenly Waterfall Lake and said, “Could it be that Fang Xingjian has already cleared the third stage?”

Thinking of this possibility, everyone fell silent.

Norman threw a glance at Hoult's furrowed brows and laughed

awkwardly, “Aren’t Lord James and the others waiting here? What does this say? This says that, according to their judgement, Fang Xingjian has yet to clear this stage. This is why they’re still waiting here.”

The more he spoke, the clearer his thoughts became, and the more confident his tone became.

He continued to say, “What level is Lord James at? What sword arts cultivation does Master Hoppes have? Since they’re waiting here, it must mean that Fang Xingjian has yet to clear the third stage and thus they’re waiting.”

His tone was filled with certainty and the others all nodded in agreement when they heard what he said.

However, a soft voice rang out, “What if they’re waiting for Fang Xingjian to come back from the fourth stage? There’s no one on guard at the final stage of the Killing Techniques Palace.”

Norman glared at the one who spoke and said, “You’re saying that the Headmaster from two generations ago, James, the head of the sword arts team, Hoppes, and so many other teachers are waiting here, waiting for Fang Xingjian, a newcomer? Do you think that that’s possible?”

Even the person who suggested it felt that it was quite impossible, and he scratched his head, feeling embarrassed.

However, Hoult still appeared slightly gloomy. Hearing everyone’s guesses, he could not help but say, “Alright, stop trying to make guesses. Let’s just wait here.”

Therefore, everyone sat down, crossed their legs, and waited for an unknown result.

Half an hour passed... One hour passed... After about one hour and fifteen minutes, everyone appeared slightly impatient. Just then, from a path on the opposite side of the Heavenly Waterfall Lake, four silhouettes walked over.

It was Fang Xingjian, Rota, and two students who were leading the way.

James laughed out loud and went up to him with the others. He asked, with some anticipation in his eyes, “Xingjian, have you cleared all four stages of the Killing Techniques Palace?”

Seeing the sudden appearance of such a large group of people and the many solemn looking teachers standing before them, the two students became extremely nervous. They had never come across such a large formation, with close to half of the leaders in the Sword Arts Department standing before them. What was going on?

Especially the old man who had no care for his appearances and seemed as old as an ancient tree... Amongst those who had participated in the Regional Selection and comprehended the Pantheon Monument, which of them did not recognize that he was the academy’s Headmaster from two generations ago?

And there was only one possible reason why so many people had gathered here—Fang Xingjian.

The two of them turned to look at Fang Xingjian, their gazes filled with jealousy.

Especially when Fang Xingjian had a youthful appearance of seventeen years old. What everyone now saw was not youth and immaturity, but a brilliant, shining future.

Chapter 295 Goal

Fang Xingjian looked at James, the Head of Department. Although he felt there was something strange, Fang Xingjian nodded anyway and said, “I’ve just learned the Lightless Sword from the fourth stage.”

As he said this, the Mountain Shifting Sword was activated, and a rock spike appeared in his hand. He then swept out with the stone sword, causing everything within a one hundred meter radius to darken as if the sun in the sky had been blocked by a thick layer of clouds.

However, how could there possibly be any clouds in the sky right now? This was not a natural weather transformation but a result of the Lightless Sword Fang Xingjian had activated. It gathered the light from the sun, causing all the rays from the sun within a hundred meter radius to be sucked into the longsword he was holding.

Fang Xingjian’s stone sword turned into a white-colored light sword. And under the high temperature, it continued to heat up the air, causing white steam to form.

Upon seeing this scene, James, the Head of Department, laughed out loud. His already wrinkled face now looked like a piece of old bark with trenches all over.

The eyes of Swordmaster Hoppes, the head of the Regional Academy’s sword arts research group, had also lit up. “Excellent! To be able to break through all the stages of the Killing Techniques Palace... Xingjian, what you’ve done today will definitely be recorded into history. It won’t be long before your name spreads across the world.”

The other teachers next to him all revealed gazes of strong astonishment, envy, and admiration.

Although it sounded cool to be breaking through the Killing Techniques Palace within a day, only these Conferred Knights, the strong experts who had made their way through the Killing Techniques Palace themselves, would know just how difficult it was to accomplish this.

This achievement was not child's play which could be accomplished easily. The amounts of effort, hard work, preparation, talent, and strong foundation required were unbelievable.

They suddenly thought of what Head of Department James had said earlier. When Fang Xingjian reached their age, how far would he have progressed by then?

Hoult, Norman, and the others, who had been standing far away, also walked up and listened in on their conversation. When they heard that Fang Xingjian had actually cleared all stages of the Killing Techniques Palace within a day and acquired all four Killing techniques in each of the stages, their expressions were priceless.

Hoult could not help but step forth and stare into Fang Xingjian's eyes as he asked, "Fang Xingjian, you learned all four sets of Killing techniques in the Killing Techniques Palace within a day?"

Seeing Fang Xingjian nod, Hoult's tone was full of doubt when he said, "But for you to be able to learn four sets of Killing techniques in a day... I don't understand. How on earth did you do that?"

Although Hoult had appeared abruptly, his question was something which everyone present was curious about. Therefore, no one stopped him. They all looked at Fang Xingjian, as if waiting for his answer in great anticipation.

Fang Xingjian gave it some thought and said, "Talent. I'm able to pick up any sword technique after looking at it for a few times. If it's a Killing technique which is slightly more complicated, I'll be able to learn it within one to two hours at most."

Hearing this reply, Hoult's expression simply collapsed. The expressions of the other people present were no better.

Initially, Hoult had thought up of a bunch of theories and rationales to rebut regardless of what Fang Xingjian's reply would be, and even if he failed, he could try the method himself and think of ways to surpass Fang Xingjian.

However, Fang Xingjian's reply was very simple.

To Conferred Knights like them who had been going through endless tough trainings, wanting to pick up and synthesize Killing techniques, make up for their flaws, and strengthen themselves... Fang Xingjian's talent was like a cheat.

However, James immediately said in a low voice, "Alright, Xingjian, let's not talk about this anymore." James knew Fang Xingjian's words would attract a lot of hatred. People who had been cultivating their sword techniques for over ten years or even for several decades would feel extremely jealous and furious if they were to hear what Fang Xingjian had just said.

Therefore, James added, "One more thing. You all mustn't spread what you've just heard either."

Hoult could not really tolerate it as it was, so he asked again, "Usually, what is the maximum level for your sword techniques?" He stared at Fang Xingjian, as if he would charge at Fang Xingjian if he refused to answer.

Fang Xingjian had not planned on hiding as much as he had done in the past. Right now, he was equipped with Terra Ingurgitation, Boundaries Negation, and four new Killing sword techniques. Additionally, he even had the protection of a level 29 Divine Armor. Therefore, he had less concern to hold back. Moreover, he was still progressing at an unbelievable speed.

So, he eventually just gave a slightly lower number, "Usually it's around level 20 to 30."

Hearing Fang Xingjian's words, Hoult felt as though a loud explosion had rung out in his mind, as if streams of thunderbolts had swept by.

“Level 20 to 30?”

Hoult's current sword technique with the highest level was already at its max with level 20. However, Fang Xingjian was saying that he was able to reach up to level 30...? What concept was this? How terrifying was his talent?

The rest of the people also drew in cold gasps. They would not even dare to think about having the maximum of their sword techniques to be at level 20 to 30.

People like Ronan and Duolun, who had trained their sword techniques to level 15, were already rare talents, capable of entering the Regional Academy and becoming Conferred Knights.

Then for those who were slightly stronger, like Hoult or the top ten students in the academy, they would be able to train their techniques to around level 20.

By drawing such comparisons, one would be able to tell just how astonishing Fang Xingjian's talent was. Moreover, this was a number he had reduced by 10 when he shared it. The job which he had transitioned into, the Heavenly Sword Sovereign, had a job specialty, the Heavenly Sword Imprint, which could increase the maximum level of his sword techniques by a maximum of ten levels.

James, the Head of Department, let out a cough and said, “Alright, we'll just keep this within ourselves and not spread a word of it out.” With that, his gaze suddenly turned sharp, “If I were to hear some related news outside, don't blame me for showing no leniency.”

He had given the order that no one was to divulge the news of the level of Fang Xingjian's sword techniques.

After saying that with a solemn expression, James then looked at Fang Xingjian with a wide smile and said, “Xingjian, your result this time around is really out of my expectations. Once news of you clearing the Killing Techniques Palace within a day is spread outside, this will even bring fame to our Great Western Region Regional Academy.

“If you have any requests, just say it. If I have the authority to make the decision, I’ll definitely promise to do it for you.”

Hoppes also said, “Xingjian, although you’ve rejected me twice, I must still say this again. With your talent, if you don’t join my sword arts team, it’ll be too much of a waste.”

Hearing that Fang Xingjian had actually rejected Hoppes twice, everyone’s expressions were even more priceless than before as quite a number of them had actually wanted to join Hoppes’ sword arts team.

However, right now, they could only look at Fang Xingjian in envy.

Hearing this, James, the Head of Department James, also said solemnly, “Xingjian, there are still many advantages to joining Hoppes’ sword arts team. You can have access to the most advanced information and theories there. If you’re worried that it’ll take too much of your time, how about this? You can participate in the experiments selectively.

“If you have any other requests, just let me know. If I can do it, I’ll definitely promise to do it for you.”

Hearing James’ words, everyone was once again astonished.

However, this astonishment was just the beginning. Fang Xingjian gave it some thought before saying, “I’d like to take part in next year’s National Selection and come out in first place. For this, I’ll need the academy’s full support.”

Chapter 296 Joining

Upon hearing Fang Xingjian's words, everyone fell silent.

Fang Xingjian had only just entered the Regional Academy, yet he was already thinking of participating in next year's National Selection.

Moreover, what was the situation like for next year's National Selection? A level 30 Divine Remains Equipment was being put up as a reward, which would affect the Regional Academy's budget. Countless young experts as well as old monsters, who had been cultivating for many years, had all come out, vying for first place.

One would be able to know just by thinking with their toes just how fierce the competition for next year's National Selection would be. It would probably be the National Selection with the toughest competition within the last few decades.

Yet, Fang Xingjian, someone who had just become a Conferred Knight, was thinking of participating in this very National Selection one year later.

When the people present heard Fang Xingjian's words, the first thought which came to their minds was that he was crazy. If he was not crazy, then he must be too arrogant, too ignorant of just how big a world was out there.

Hoult, Norman, and the others, all looked at Fang Xingjian as if they were looking at a madman.

Just when everyone was thinking that James, the Head of Department, would reject Fang Xingjian's arrogance outright, he spoke out with much deliberation, "There isn't a lot of time left till next year's National Selection. There are only about a 11 months and a few more days?

"The competition for this National Selection is also very tough. If you don't have the abilities of someone at the peak of level 29, you

can forget about being in the top ten.

“Xingjian, with your talent, you can train for four more years and take part in the next National Selection. I’ll guarantee that you’ll be able to come out first in that National Selection.”

Fang Xingjian was unfaltering, causing Rota to be so anxious that it was as though fire was burning in her eyes.

However, Fang Xingjian simply said, “I’ll definitely take part in next year’s National Selection. And I must definitely come out first.”

James rolled his eyes and wanted to continue persuading Fang Xingjian, however, he suddenly thought of the system which had been set up for the National Selection. Smiling, James said, “Xingjian, whether or not you can participate in the National Selection isn’t something which we can decide just like that. The National Selection is intended to select the top ten existences.

“As long as you can enter the top ten of the academy, even if you don’t wish to participate in the National Selection, you’ll still have to do it. We’ll naturally give our full support to the students who will be participating in the National Selection.”

James made himself very clear. As long as Fang Xingjian was able to enter the top ten ranks in the academy, he would naturally be able to participate in the National Selection, and they would naturally support him.

Therefore, regardless of whether Fang Xingjian’s goal was the National Selection, he would just need to make himself stronger and win against the students in the Regional Academy.

Hoppes added on, “Xingjian, if you were to join my sword arts team, all the Killing techniques that we’ve collected will be open for you. So, you can continue to cultivate and synthesize sword techniques to make yourself stronger.”

Fang Xingjian nodded and said, “If I can still have free rein of my

time and schedule even after I've entered the team, then I'll do it."

"Of course." Hoppes smiled. With the talent Fang Xingjian had shown today, even if he were to just train with the sword techniques they have in the team, it would be able to bring an improvement to the progress rate of their research. It was because the rate at which he picked up sword techniques was simply too fast.

Fang Xingjian gave it some thought before speaking to James, the Head of Department, once again, "Recently, I've been wanting to publish a book, but I am afraid of encountering any political restrictions. I hope that you can stand by me."

"Publish books? It's good to publish books. With the standard of your sword techniques, you can certainly publish your own books. It's fine. I'll help you personally when the time comes. I am also in contact with many schools, and I can get all of them to use your books for their lessons."

Just as Fang Xingjian continued the conversation with James and Hoppes, and even went on to discuss about the research areas, the others started to realize that they could no longer keep up with the conversation.

Norman did not cultivate sword arts to begin with, so when he heard their conversation, he felt increasingly lost.

At the beginning, Hoult had wanted to try to understand the conversation, but soon after, he could not keep up with their lines of thought. Instead, he gradually retreated and headed outside.

Norman followed after him and asked, "Aren't you going to listen to see what they have to say?"

"There's nothing to listen to. I'm going to learn the Thunderbolt Sword Technique." Thinking of Fang Xingjian's talent and learning speed, a sense of pressure Hoult had never felt before in his life pressed down on him.

Simultaneously, a thought appeared in his mind.

‘If you’re participating in next year’s National Selection, then I’ll do the same. In what way will I, Hoult, lose out to you?’

‘So what if you have slightly more talent than I do?’

Thinking of how Fang Xingjian had been surrounded by James, the Head of Department, Hoult, and the many other teachers, like how stars surrounded the moon... the gloom on Hoult’s face grew even darker.

James continued to say, “Xingjian, how about this? Since you’ve joined the sword arts team to conduct research in sword techniques, I’ll need to budget some research funds to you. I’ll give you fifty thousand first. Use it sparingly. When you’ve come up with new results, I’ll give you more.”

A teacher at the side could not help but say, “Head of Department, this year’s budget has been planned out long ago. Where are we going to get the additional fifty thousand?”

“We’ll just have to squeeze some out.” James blew on his beard and said, “With Xingjian’s talent, even if it’s just cultivating Killing techniques, he’ll be able to bring a lot of results.

“How can our academy not support a talent like this? Go review the budget. If it’s insufficient, I can just go ask from Devitt (Governor).”

Hearing the words of James, the Head of Department, everyone felt secretly excited. This was the advantage of someone with high seniority. A person like James, a Head of Department capable of dashing straight to the Governor’s office to ask for money, was a person whom everyone would like to fawn up to.

Fang Xingjian heaved a sigh of relief as he thought about that fifty thousand gold. With this, he was halfway to his target of reaching the ten thousand gold required for him to cultivate the first level of the Mystical Prints.

The few of them then continued to discuss the concrete arrangement for the research. One day every week, Fang Xingjian would have to report to the Sword Tower where the sword arts team was located. He would then pick a project, in which he was interested, to participate in. He would also have free access to all the Killing techniques amassed by the sword arts team.

After the discussion, Fang Xingjian returned to his training room in the Sacred Land and continued his cultivation.

The news of him clearing all four stages of the Killing Techniques Palace in a day had gradually spread outside. He believed that Ferdinand would grab the opportunity to help him raise the hype and sell the book.

Right now, he needed to make good use of his time to train his sword techniques. After all, he now had five sword techniques he needed to work on: the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash; Thunderbolt Sword Technique; Mountain Shifting Sword; Aquatic Sword Formation; and Lightless Sword. He would need to work hard on cultivating these sword techniques and then synthesize them into his sword technique.

At least for the next month or two, he would not be lacking in Killing techniques to train with.

The first sword technique Fang Xingjian worked on was the Ninety Thousand Godly Demon Flash. He worked hard to cultivate this sword technique, hoping to train it to the maximum level as soon as possible before synthesizing it to his current technique.

For the few days Fang Xingjian had been cultivating, many small push carts started appearing along the streets of the Great Western City, each of them filled with many books for sale.

They tended to appear outside various academies, including aristocrat academies, dojos, and Knight Academies. When they came across Knight apprentices, they would start shouting to grab their attention in order to sell the books.

In the north of the Great Western City, at a school known as the Five Star Aristocrat Academy, which had a long history and had created countless Knights, Lilia was sweating profusely as she trained in her sword arts seriously.

Right now, Lilia was wearing a set of training clothes which included a short sleeved top and short pants. She had a slightly muscular figure, yet she did not give off an intimidating feeling. On the contrary, coupled with her tanned skin, cute face, and twin ponytails, she gave off a healthy and lively feeling.

Moreover, she was very pretty and exquisite to begin with. So, as she cultivated on the training ground, she attracted the gazes of many.

Chapter 297 Book

Next to her, a young man waved a stack of papers, smiled, and said, “Lilia, it’s the latest newspaper. Do you want to read it together?”

Newspapers were also something which the Second Prince had started recently. Currently, they were only sold in the capital of the eight regions due to the limited numbers produced. For now, it was primarily targeted toward aristocrats and high level managements. Those who could get their hands on a copy of the newspapers had all the rights to boast about it.

However, Lilia did not even look at the young man but just continued waving the greatsword in her hands, going on with her training.

The young man did not think too much of it either and continued speaking next to Lilia, “The things reported in this newspaper are all major events that have happened within the Empire. It’s said that the Second Prince had activated his great skill, Thoughts Across A Thousand Li, to be able to spread messages rapidly. Even if anything were to happen in Southern Flame Region, we would be able to know about it from here immediately.”

Hearing the young man’s words, Lilia let out a sigh, put down the greatsword in her hands, and said, “Kite, I’ve no interest in you. Stop pestering me.”

This young man by the name of Kite was also a Knight apprentice from the Five Star Aristocrat Academy. He was the most outstanding Knight apprentice for the past few years and was also the most popular one amongst the students.

However, after Lilia had enrolled into the school, he discovered that Lilia was very different from the other young aristocrat ladies he had come across previously, and thus gained an interest in her.

Kite was not angry even after hearing what Lilia had said. He merely smiled and replied, “Lilia, I’ll be attending the Prefectural Selection next year and will be becoming a Knight. As you know, I could have become a Knight long ago, but just wanted to train more to fight for the position of Prefectural Champion. This is why I’ve waited until now.”

Lilia shook her head. Seeing that it was already late, she headed for the direction of the academy’s gate.

Ever since Fang Xingjian had entered the Regional Academy, she got her father to enroll her into this academy in the Great Western Region. She had even rented a room outside the school.

Of course, Kite was not aware of all of this. It was impossible for Lilia to tell him about her background, status, and interpersonal relationships.

Therefore, to Kite, Lilia was just a young aristocrat lady from a remote district with a character which was hard to come by.

Seeing Lilia leaving, Kite immediately chased up to her and said, “Lilia, are you going back? Let me send you back. The security in the Great Western Region hasn’t been good recently.”

Seeing that Lilia continued to ignore him, Kite grinned, picked up the newspaper, and started reading, “Oh? Western Garrison is chasing after the people of Garcia. I heard that the people from Garcia had invaded up to the Western Garrison’s territory. Hehe, to think that these black devils from Garcia dared to cause a ruckus in the Empire. They’re really a bunch of fools.

“Oh? Rehlings from the Northern Ice Region has come out from seclusion. He has spread word that he’ll be crushing all the other opponents in the National Selection next year, gaining an overwhelming victory and becoming the National Champion.” Kite continued, “This Rehlings is amazing. He’s said to be the number one genius in Northern Ice Region for the past two hundred years. He has been a level 29 second transition Conferred

Knight for a very long time, and it's said that even the Northern Ice Region's Governor isn't his match.

"Tsk tsk, if not for the fact that the conditions Northern Ice Region gave him were too good, he would have gone to the central long ago. However, the reward for the upcoming National Selection is too great, and even Rehlings is unable to stay away."

Although Lilia felt nothing for Kite, when she heard him reading the newspaper and talking about the events happening in the world, she was still curious about the contents.

Kite snuck a glance toward Lilia and realized that she was really listening. This made him put in even more effort into reading the news.

"The famous swordmaster from the southeast, Sasa, has come. He's even going to become a teacher at the Regional Academy?" Kite's eyes immediately lit up as he said, "Sasa is said to have the name of Sword Saint in Eastern Sand Region. To think that he is also coming to our Regional Academy?"

"In the future, it'd be great if I could receive guidance from him for my sword arts."

The two of them continued walking. Lilia did not say a single word, and Kite eventually stopped as well. He was a young man in his youth, after all, and did not have enough patience. He could not help but ask, "Lilia, what would it take for you to be willing to talk to me? Am I that detestable?"

Lilia looked behind Kite, and looking at her gaze, Kite could not help but turn around as well. He saw a book merchant pushing a cart and promoting his products.

"Unrivalled talent, Fang Xingjian! Cleared all seven levels of the Pantheon Monument in the Regional Selection! Broke through all four stages to the Killing Techniques Palace consecutively within a day! The secret record behind Fang Xingjian's sword training!

Those who wish to buy a copy of it, please head over here! Don't pass this opportunity by! If you were to miss out on the secrets behind how Fang Xingjian got strong, you'll regret it for life!"

The merchant continued to shout out loud, and many students were queuing up to purchase a copy of the book.

Kite frowned. "Isn't this Fang Xingjian too arrogant, publishing a book so early? Unrivalled talent? Isn't he afraid of making a laughing stock out of himself to the people from the other regions?"

As his academy's top student, Kite was instinctively repulsed by other geniuses close to his age. He himself was seventeen years old, the same as Fang Xingjian. This made him detest Fang Xingjian even more.

However, Lilia smiled and said, "Then as long as you can clear all seven levels of the Pantheon Monument and get through the Killing Techniques Palace within a day, I'll talk to you.

"I'll be honest with you. The partner I hope to find in the future is a genius like Fang Xingjian."

Hearing Lilia's words, Kite was dumbfounded. Regardless of whether it was clearing all seven levels of the Pantheon Monument or getting through the Killing Techniques Palace within a day, they were both results which could not be surpassed. They were things that many level 29 Conferred Knights would not even dare to think of, let alone Kite.

It was one thing for Kite to criticize Fang Xingjian, but it was impossible for him to do what Fang Xingjian had done.

Kite was speechless and could only watch as Lilia ran over to the book merchant to get a copy of the book.

Kite let out a cold snort, crushed the newspapers in his hand instantly, and headed home angrily.

His house was also in the Great Western City's aristocratic

district. Upon entering the hall, he noticed that his mother was already waiting for him. When she saw him, she waved him over, “Kite, come meet your aunt and your uncle. They came all the way from Harvest City.”

“Oh, this must be Kite? He looks so handsome.”

“What’s the use of appearances?” Kite’s mother smiled and said, “Who looks at appearances these days?”

Kite stood there while smiling, as if he was a statue free for others to appraise. He had long gotten used to such conversations.

“He’s amazing even if we’re looking at abilities. Kite should already have the ability to become a Knight, right? When will he be participating in the Prefectural Selection?”

“Next year.” Every time this issue was brought up, Kite and his mother would feel extremely proud, “This child could have passed the Prefectural Selection long ago, but we’re worried that he’s too young and knows no restraint, thus we decided to put him through the mill for a few more years.”

“Kite is really outstanding, unlike that son of mine who only knows how to get into promiscuous relationships with women. I should find some time to let him come over and learn from Kite.”

Kite appeared to be slightly impatient, but in fact, every time the seniors praised him, he could not help but feel slightly proud.

However, in the next moment, his aunt suddenly took out a book and said, “Oh right, I bought this book on my way here. It’s supposed to be the biography of Fang Xingjian. It even has the secrets to his sword arts mastery. You’ve heard of Fang Xingjian, right?”

Chapter 298 Hate

“How could I not know of him? This guy is amazing!” Kite’s mother seemed to have gone into gossip mode, “Not only did he solve all seven levels of mysteries in the Pantheon Monument, but I also heard that he cleared the Killing Techniques Palace within a day. Youngsters these days are really amazing. Oh, so this is his biography?”

“That’s right. I’ve heard that Fang Xingjian has written this himself. It not only records his experiences, but also the secrets to his training. I specially bought two copies, one for my foolish son, the other for Kite.”

“Thank you! When I heard that this book was going to be published, I wanted to buy it.” Saying that, Kite’s mother took the book over to Kite, who saw the five big words written on it 《The Secrets to Sword Training》.

Kite frowned and could not help but say, “This Fang Xingjian is just seventeen years old, right? He’s about the same age as me, so how much of a story could his biography be?”

“Kite, that’s where you’re wrong. Don’t blame me for nagging, but Fang Xingjian really is a capable person with great talent,” Kite’s aunt said. “Do you know about the Pantheon Monument? It was something left behind by the Divine level expert Melancholic Monarch, two hundred years ago. For the past two hundred years, there hasn’t been anyone who could solve the mysteries behind it all the way to the seventh level. Fang Xingjian is the first.

“And you guys should know about the Killing Techniques Palace too, right? That is such a great challenge. Back then, eldest brother took an entire year to clear through all the stages of the Killing Techniques Palace. I heard that Governor Devitt also took about a month, in the past. Look at Fang Xingjian! He managed to clear it within in a single day! Really, there are always people who are

stronger out there.”

In order to make sure people knew that Fang Xingjian had broken through all seven levels of mysteries to the Pantheon Monument and how he had cleared the Killing Techniques Palace within a single day, Ferdinand had included a significant introduction of the Pantheon Monument and the Killing Techniques Palace in the book.

There was no other way around it. This was considered higher-tiered information and many aristocrats who did not take up martial arts, and low level commoners, were not very clear about them. However, in order to bring greater emphasis and highlight to Fang Xingjian’s achievements, Ferdinand had no other way out but to explain in detail the existence of the Killing Techniques Palace, as well as the unique traits of the Pantheon Monument.

It was only after people read about them that they understood how significant and how horrifying Fang Xingjian’s achievements actually were.

Kite’s mother pushed the book into Kite’s arms and said, “You’re both seventeen years old, but he has already become a Conferred Knight. What are you still doing? Have a good read from the book Fang Xingjian wrote and learn the secrets written inside.”

Kite suddenly felt very stifled, feeling increasing hatred against the name of Fang Xingjian.

However, things would not turn out as he had hoped. Unintentionally or not, the Second Prince’s newspaper had also reported the news that Fang Xingjian had cleared the Killing Techniques Palace within a day, adding fuel to the fire.

In the Miracle World, which was like the Earth’s middle century, it was very difficult for ordinary people to send messages. Usually, only extremely powerful experts would be able to transmit messages across one thousand or ten thousand li, but there still were various restrictions.

Therefore, the rate at which information spread across the world was not fast at all.

The newspapers that the Second Prince had set up relied on his Killing technique, ‘Thoughts Across A Thousand Li’, to easily transmit information across long distances. For example, this time around, news of Fang Xingjian having cleared the Killing Techniques Palace within a day had been spread to the capitals of all the eight regions. This had made Fang Xingjian’s name known to all members of the Empire’s higher echelon.

When all the leaders in the world read it, and since they only read this newspaper, how great was its impact? This was how widespread Fang Xingjian’s reputation now was.

Moreover, both the act of solving all seven levels of mysteries in the Pantheon Monument and the act of clearing all four stages in the Killing Techniques Palace within a day, were to be boasted of for life. They were both very serious and would grab anyone’s attention. Moreover, they had both been realized by Fang Xingjian.

...

In a small alley in Great Western City’s commoner district, there were countless gangsters, triads, and outlaws.

Along this dark and dangerous street, an old lady was imitating how others were walking. She was wearing clothes made from coarse fabric, her face covered with a veil, and she appeared to be just an ordinary old woman from the commoner district.

As she was walking, a group of kids suddenly dashed out, holding small knives in their hands.

“Don’t move!”

“If you were to move, we’ll kill you!”

The kids snatched away the old woman’s basket and the food in the basket. Another child picked up a book in the basket and looked at the big words 《The Secrets to Sword Training》. He was

illiterate, nor did he understand what was written inside.

The child viciously asked, “What book is this? Is this some secret martial arts manual?”

“This isn’t a secret manual.” The old woman’s hands clenched up into fists unknowingly, and fury seemed to flash in her eyes. However, she held it in and said, “This is 《The Secrets to Sword Training》, the book that Fang Xingjian has written.” At the mention of the name Fang Xingjian, the old woman’s teeth seemed to be tightly clenched together, as if she was gritting her teeth.

If Fang Xingjian were here, he would definitely be able to recognize who the old woman was. She was Kaunitz’s aunt, Tresia Clan’s Rebecca.

Back when they had attacked Fang Xingjian, Rebecca had made her escape, eventually ending up wanted for treason. However, she was after all a level 19 Knight, and had managed to make her escape. She had even hid herself in Great Western City. No one knew what she was plotting.

However, she could only disguise herself as an old woman in the commoner district, even needing to tolerate a group of kids slightly older than ten, not daring to lift a hand against them. To Rebecca, who had grown up as an aristocrat and who was extremely arrogant, this was a great humiliation and agony.

Every time she came across something like this, she would hate Fang Xingjian even more.

However, she still had to put up with it. The moment she lifted her hand here, she would immediately be discovered. How many Conferred Knights were there in the Great Western City? Any one of them would be able to crush her easily, with a single finger.

Therefore, she could only patiently explain, “This is just a storybook, it’s not a secret manual.”

However, the kid’s eyes suddenly lit up and he said, “It’s this

year's Regional Champion, Fang Xingjian? That genius who solved all ten levels of mysteries in the Saints Monument? I heard that he's a commoner?"

Rebecca exhaled and said, "It's not the Saints Monument, but the Pantheon Monument. There's also not ten levels of mysteries..." She lifted her head and looked at the kid before her, and then started to wonder why she was explaining this to them. She then said, "That's the one."

The kid pushed the book into Rebecca's arms and said coldly, "Read it out for us."

Fury grew in Rebecca's heart, but she calmed down very quickly. She smiled and said, "What's so good about this book? The things written in it are all lies..."

"Read it!"

A few of the kids brandished their knives, as if they would thrust them into Rebecca at the next moment.

A slight breeze seemed to blow in the alley. It was the air currents caused by the Reduced Force Field.

Rebecca breathed out a long sigh,, then eventually picked up the book and started reading it.

"This is a letter written to everyone who loves sword arts, loves Knights, still hold dreams, and is willing to fight for them..."

"This story began in a place called The School of Sword Arts."

Chapter 299 Infamy

“On the training grounds of The School of Sword Arts, Fang Xingjian sent Kaunitz flying with one sword attack. The latter’s eyes rolled back and he was so angry that he spurted out three mouthful of blood before falling to the ground and fainting.”

‘Slander, that’s all blatant slandering!’ When Rebecca read to this point, her hands were trembling from fury. The more she read, the angrier she felt.

However, the group of kids all became very excited.

“Good one! He deserved it!”

“Kill that Kaunitz!”

“If I were Fang Xingjian, I’d just chop off his head.”

“You idiot! Kaunitz is an aristocrat. If Fang Xingjian were to kill him, he wouldn’t be able to take part in the Prefectural Selection.”

Unknowingly, over ten commoners started surrounding Rebecca, listening to her read the story.

When the leader of the group of kids saw Rebecca stop, he immediately shouted, “Why are you stopping? Continue! Tell us what happened next!”

Rebecca took a deep breath and continued, “Fang Xingjian defeated Kaunitz in a single sword stroke. In that instant, thunderous loud cheers filled the place, and Vivian’s face turned pale...”

Although Rebecca’s posture was rigid, she read the entire story expressionlessly, as if she was chanting a mantra. However, in the story, the young male commoner was extremely talented. The story of him defeating the vicious and terrible aristocrats and advancing forward was extremely attractive to the commoners.

As Rebecca read out loud, more and more people started

gathering around her. In this world where there were no televisions, no telephones, and no internet, it was a rare enjoyment to the commoners to be able to listen to stories and think of themselves as the main characters.

They clenched their fists tightly when the First Prince appeared, looked worried when Charlie was conducting the interrogation, and cheered when the Governor appeared.

“Charlie let out a howl, dropped to his knees, and wailed as he hugged Fang Xingjian’s thigh, ‘Xingjian, Lord Xingjian, I beg of you, please let me off. Everything was the First Prince’s fault. I had eyes but failed to recognize a talent like yourself. Please let me off.’”

When Rebecca was reading this, the fury in her heart calmed down slowly and what remained was only cold laughs. In her eyes, the stories in this biography were totally illogical and were just random gibberish. How could Charlie be as weak as what was depicted in the stories?

However, the many listeners next to her cheered loudly.

“This is so satisfying!”

“There are too many of such corrupted officials in the Empire.”

“This Charlie really deserves to die!”

Seeing the commoners’ reactions, Rebecca no longer felt angry, shaking her head at their ignorance.

However, since this book was edited by Ferdinand and other people, the commoners could feel a stronger sense of connection for Fang Xingjian as well as all the antagonists in the story. Or rather, it could be said that it was more suited for the present people’s taste.

More and more people were gathered here, and Rebecca started reading increasingly faster, hoping to finish the story soon. However, fury once again appeared in her eyes.

“That Rebecca let out a cold laugh, saying, ‘Fang Xingjian this b*stard neither has respect nor show any modesty, going against all values and ethics. So what if those Great Warriors of Garcia have run away? What matters is that we surround and focus on Fang Xingjian.’

“Just like that, Kaunitz, Rebecca, and the others, for their own selfish reasons, paid no heed to the Empire’s safety and let Garcia’s Destined Warrior Mumukeya escape... Slander, this is all blatant slander!”

Halfway through the reading, Rebecca abruptly stood up with a furious face as if she wanted to tear Fang Xingjian into pieces immediately.

However, another strong man snatched the book over immediately and said impatiently, “I’ve long felt that this old hag has been reading too slowly. Let me read.”

Rebecca was overcome with fury and unable to react in time. However, she subconsciously tolerated everything. After all, she could not create a fuss in Great Western City. Moreover, she had tolerated for half a year, and tolerating had become instinctive.

That strong man did not know that he had made a narrow escape from hell. He picked up the book and continued reading, “Rebecca and the others walked over toward Fang Xingjian proudly. Fang Xingjian picked up his sword and wanted to chase after Mumukeya. However, he suddenly spewed out a mouthful of fresh blood and said furiously, ‘Rebecca, when the country is in peril, how could you guys possibly let Mumukeya escape for your own selfish motives?’

“Kaunitz laughed out loud, ‘Fang Xingjian, so what if we’ve let him escape? This day next year will be your death anniversary. You’re better off worrying about yourself.’

“Rebecca also laughed and said, ‘B*stard, to think that you would have a day like this too. No matter how important the country and

people are, they aren't as important as me. I'll skin you today. No one will be able to stop me'..."

"Shut up!"

Rebecca let out a loud bellow and snatched the book from the strong man.

Seeing that the story was interrupted at the most exciting point, the others immediately started shouting their heads off in anger. The few triad members from earlier who were still listening happily even stood up and were about to walk toward Rebecca to teach this old hag a lesson.

The group of people headed up, as if they were going to surround her. However, at the next moment, a tremendous surge of power scattered outward from Rebecca.

A loud, deafening sound rang out. After a series of bone breaking sounds, countless terrified cries rang out.

The commoners in the surroundings were all struck and sent flying by Rebecca's Reduced Force Field. She let out a furious bellow, and the book turned into small pieces of paper, scattering in the air.

She had only wanted to buy a copy of the book to see if Fang Xingjian had written any secrets in it. However, right now, she was overwhelmed with fury, 'To think that the part about the biography are all preposterous lies which sully my name. Fang Xingjian, you and I are irreconcilable!'

Knowing that she could no longer stay in Great Western City after exposing herself, she soared into the air and landed in an alley, attempting to flee.

However, she had only moved a few hundred meters when she heard a lady reading, "Rebecca stood in the arena with her old face covered in wrinkles as she pointed at Fang Xingjian and scolded, 'You little b*stard! To think that you dare to think about killing

Kaunitz in the arena! Are there still any laws and regulations around here?

“Headmaster, this is the Prefectural Champion you guys have taught? This little b*stard...”

Veins popped up on Rebecca’s forehead and she dashed out into the darkness, not wishing to hear this voice anymore.

However, after making a few turns, someone else was creating a commotion, “Kaunitz and Rebecca are really inhumane. To think that they thought of betraying the country and inflicting harm upon Fang Xingjian for their own selfish motives. Thank goodness they didn’t succeed.”

“Haha, thank goodness Kaunitz was killed by Fang Xingjian and even Rebecca was made a fugitive. You reap what you sow.”

Rebecca stomped down on the ground, leaving a small crater. Her expression became extremely twisted, but she continued moving forward in hopes of secretly slipping out.

She progressed very carefully and did not come across any accidents. Based on her estimations, Knights should already have arrived at where she first attacked.

‘It’s fine. Even if they were to find the place, they won’t be able to know that it’s me for now. As long as I hurry up...’

Chapter 300 Popularizing

Just then, she saw a few other kids along the streets playing around while holding wooden sabers and swords. A person holding a wooden sword said, “I am Fang Xingjian.”

Another thin and weak looking kid as well as a fatty both quickly said at the same time, “I am Fang Xingjian. No, I am Fang Xingjian.”

“You’re Kaunitz!” The kid holding a sword said as he pointed to the skinny kid. Then he pointed to the fat kid, saying, “You’re Rebecca!”

“Beat them up!”

“Kill Kaunitz! Kill Rebecca!”

Looking at this scene, Rebecca was so angry that she almost fainted. As a fugitive, there was no way that Rebecca could stand up for herself, and as Fang Xingjian’s books were being sold, more and more people would get to read the book.

And it was foreseeable that as Fang Xingjian’s reputation rose, the book would become increasingly famous and a growing number of people would read the book. Rebecca and Kaunitz might even earn themselves eternal infamy and everlasting shame.

“Fang! Xing! Jian!”

Everlasting shame... This was something that Rebecca had never ever thought of. Yet, right now, Fang Xingjian could really leave her name in the records of history.

However, it was infamy.

“It can’t be like this. It must not be like this.” Rebecca gritted her teeth. She was a person who had one foot in her coffin, but it made her even more unable to accept this.

She put aside the matter of taking revenge on Fang Xingjian.

Right now, her mind was filled with thoughts of how to stop the further distribution of the books.

Therefore, she no longer tried to escape, but took the risk and stayed behind.

That night, a book merchant's cart gradually headed across from Ferdinand's house.

A middle-aged man with a weather-beaten face was trembling all over. He spoke in an almost crying tone, "Madam, we've arrived. It's here."

"Ferdinand stays here?" Rebecca was covered by a black robe, and she spoke in an extremely cold voice, "He's the supplier?"

"Yes... yes..." Feeling the pressure on him growing stronger, the guy's heartbeat grew faster as well. "Madam, I'm only someone who sells books. Please let me off. I don't know anything."

"Someone who sells books?" Rebecca's expression turned twisted as she said, "You guys are helping the wicked perpetuate wicked deeds! You're falsifying history!"

Under the pressure of the Reduced Force Field, the middle-aged man's eyes started to roll back, and many strangle marks appeared on his neck. Then, his head bent to the side. He was strangled to death by Rebecca.

Rebecca squinted her eyes slightly, looking at the small villa before her. She had to kidnap a few book merchants before she could find this place. Her greatest goal was to coerce Ferdinand into submission and to get him to recover all the remaining books which had yet to be sold.

To her, Ferdinand and the others were at most level 19 Knights. There was no way they would be able to resist her battle prowess of an extremely senior level 19 Knight.

Moreover, the fact that she had attacked should already have been exposed, and she had no idea of whether or not the

authorities had discovered that she was the one who had done it. She did not have much time left to waste.

‘Get him to call back as many as he can. This needs to be done quickly, before the books completely disseminate.’

Just as Rebecca was thinking this, she had already stepped into the darkness and slowly made her way toward the back door of Ferdinand’s small building.

‘Ferdinand, don’t blame me. If you want to blame, then blame yourself for choosing the wrong side to stand on.

‘You guys have gone overboard, wanting me to bear eternal infamy.’

Rebecca placed her hand on the doorknob and covered it gradually with her Reduced Force Field. Then, with a slight force, the lock was broken.

She slowly and carefully opened the door, not daring to make a single sound. Her Reduced Force Field had encompassed an area of a ten meter radius around her. She froze everything she noticed in order to not make a single sound.

She knew that she was stronger than Ferdinand, but he was not alone. Since they were both level 19 Knights, once Ferdinand were to start escaping at his full power, it would be too disadvantageous to her if they started a chase within the Great Western City.

Therefore, she was extremely carefully, taking one step at a time toward the building. Hearing faint sounds coming from the hall, she gradually closed in toward its direction.

Five meters...

Four meters...

Three meters...

Two meters...

After making the last turn, Rebecca dashed in, churning out

sword Qis of thunder and fire together with her Reduced Force Field. She had no intention of holding back. Other than Ferdinand, she also planned on killing everyone else.

However, the moment she dashed out, she saw Fang Xingjian, Ferdinand, Anthony, and Robert sitting in the hall. There was also an extremely old man whose face was covered with wrinkles and looked like ancient tree bark.

Stunned, the old man threw a glance toward her. As he lightly pressed down his palm, Rebecca was slapped down to the ground like flatbread. She felt excruciating pain all over, as if she was a mosquito frozen in amber, rendered immobile.

Head of Department James who had easily pressed Rebecca down to the ground, asked, “Who is this old hag? She’s quite fierce.”

Rebecca was trying to summon all her strength to struggle, and her face was twisted as if she was a violent ghost. She really did look very, very fierce.

Fang Xingjian threw a glance at her and said casually, “She’s just a fugitive. Just hand her over to the City Guards Institution later.”

James did not pay any heed to a woman who was only at Knight level. He then continued their earlier discussion, “Hehe, it’s no wonder that you wanted to clear the Killing Techniques Palace. With your reputation raised, your book will sell well.

“But I looked at the contents of this book...”

“This book isn’t intended for experts.” Ferdinand said apologetically, “We’re selling to ordinary people for the sake of earning money.

“We’ll publish books targeted at Knights in the future.”

James grinned and said, “It won’t still be a storybook, right?”

Ferdinand smiled as well, “It’ll be a book that provides guidance on sword arts. However, we’ll also continue releasing storybooks.

They are selling quite well.”

James said, unconcerned, “How much have you guys earned?” He had read the book. It was filled with boring stories and was of no interest to him. However, some of the things that Fang Xingjian had learned about sword arts were still quite interesting.

Moreover, with each book being sold at fifty copper coins, he felt that such a cheap item would not be able to bring in much money.

Ferdinand shook his head and said, “We started promoting the book one week before and till now, we’ve sold a total of 30,000 books. That is 150 coins. It’s only been how many days?

“But it’s a pity that there are already pirated copies. People have been making copies of the book and selling them at the outskirts of the city. Head of Department James, can you do something about this?”

“Copying the books for selling?”

“That’s right. These people used the worst quality paper to make copies of our book. They are selling their copies at twenty-five copper coins while we are selling ours at fifty copper coins. Half the market has been snatched by them.

“Sir, think about it. There are so many villages near Great Western City as well as tens of towns too. There are a few million people out there. Even if only 10% of the people buy our book, it’ll still be a few thousand gold coins. If we were to sell it across the country, it would be at least hundreds of thousands or even millions...”

James’ eyes wavered a little before he said, “I’m only able to control the area within the Great Western Region at most.”

Ferdinand smiled, “That’s enough.”

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